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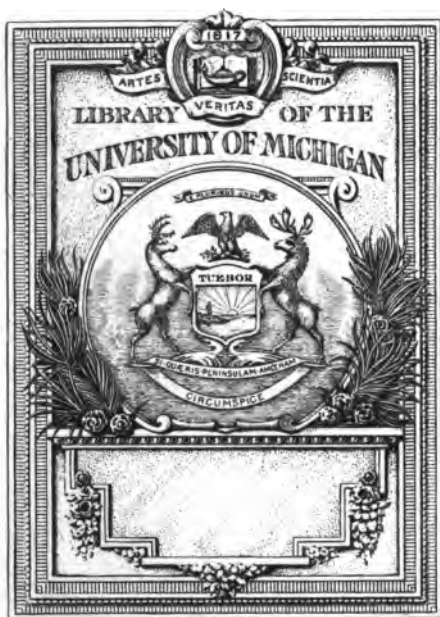
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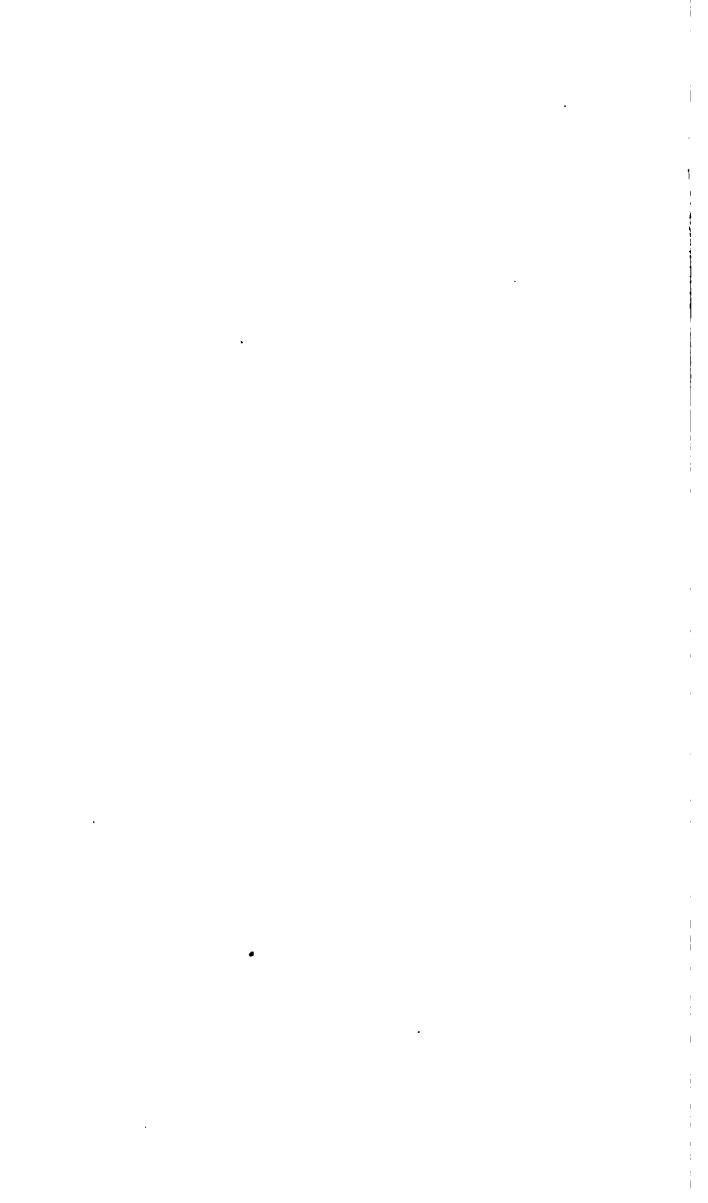
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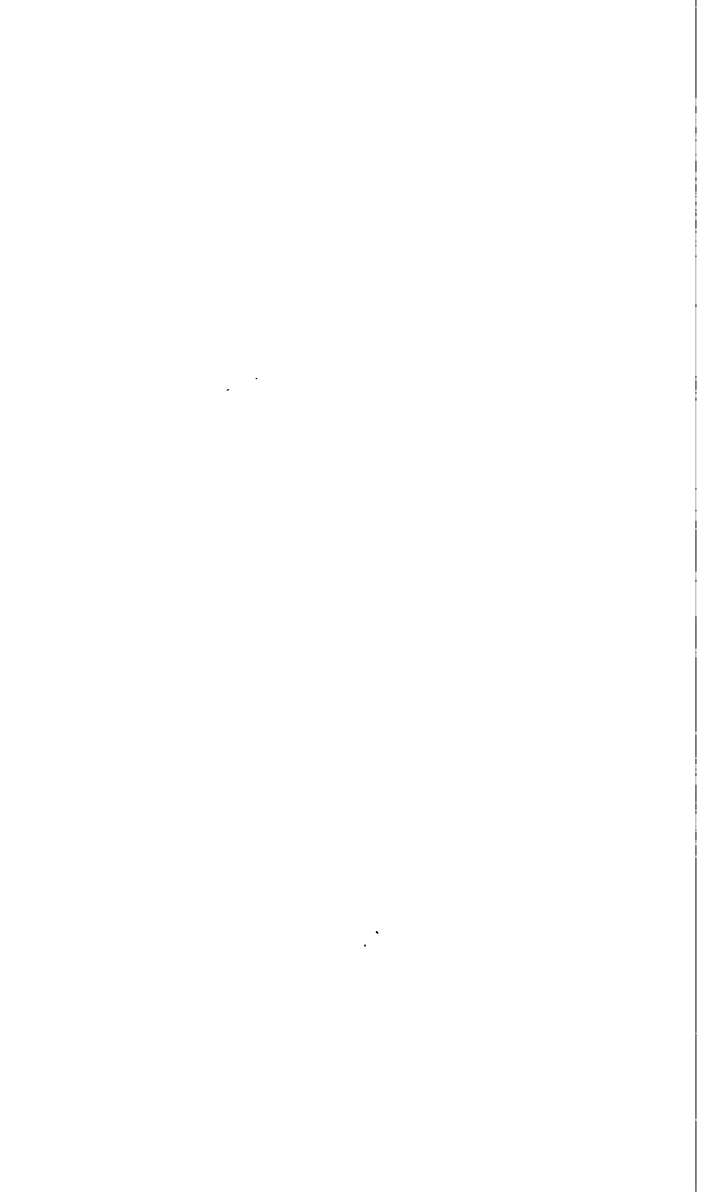
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**THE
MOUNTAIN BARD.**

**WITH A
MEMOIR
OF THE AUTHOR'S LIFE,
WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.**

7712

THE
MOUNTAIN BARD;

CONSISTING OF
Legendary Ballads and Tales.

By JAMES HOGG,
THE ETTRICK SHEPHERD.

THE THIRD EDITION, GREATLY ENLARGED.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED
A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR'S LIFE,
WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

EDINBURGH;

OLIVER & BOYD, HIGH-STREET :

SOLD ALSO BY

G. AND W. B. WHITTAKER, AVE-MARIA LANE, LONDON ;
AND WILLIAM TURNBULL, GLASGOW.

1821.

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John Grant
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TO

WALTER SCOTT, Esq.

Sheriff of Ettrick Forest,

AND

MINSTREL OF THE SCOTTISH BORDER,

THE FOLLOWING

TALES

ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY HIS AFFECTIONATE FRIEND AND HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

Mitchelslack, Sept. 27, 1807.

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MEMOIR

OF THE

LIFE OF JAMES HOGG.

THE Friend to whom Mr Hogg made the following communication had some hesitation in committing it to the public. On the one hand, he was sensible, not only that the incidents are often trivial, but that they are narrated in a style more suitable to their importance to the Author himself, than to their own nature and consequences. But the efforts of a strong mind and vigorous imagination, to develop themselves even under the most disadvantageous circumstances, may be always considered with pleasure, and often with profit; and if, upon a retrospect, the possessor be disposed to view with self-complacency his victory under difficulties, of which he only can judge the extent, it will be readily pardoned by those who consider the Author's scanty opportunities of knowledge,—and remember, that it is only on attaining the last and most recondite recess of human science, that we discover how little we really know. To those who are unacquainted with the pastoral scenes in which our Author was educated, it may afford some amusement to find real shepherds actually contending for a poetical prize, and to remark some other peculiarities in their habits and manners. Above all, these Memoirs ascertain the authenticity of the publication, and are therefore entitled to be prefixed to it.

MY DEAR SIR,

Mitchell-Slack, Nov. 1806.

ACCORDING to your request, which I never entirely disregard, I am now going to give you some account of my manner of life and *extensive* education. I must again apprise you, that, whenever I have occasion to speak of myself and my performances, I find it impossible to divest myself of an inherent vanity ; but, making allowances for that, I will lay before you the outlines of my life,—with the circumstances that gave rise to my juvenile pieces, and my own opinion of them, as faithfully

As if you were the minister of heaven
Sent down to search the secret sins of men.

I am the second of four sons by the same father and mother ; namely, Robert Hogg and Margaret Laidlaw. My progenitors were all shepherds of this country. My father, like myself, was bred to the occupation of a shepherd,—and served in that capacity until his marriage with my mother ; about which time, having saved some substance, he took a lease of the farms of Ettrickhouse and Ettrickhall. He then commenced dealing in sheep—bought up great numbers, and drove them both to the English and Scottish markets ; but, at length, owing to a great fall in the prices of sheep, and the absconding of his principal debtor, he was ruined, became bankrupt, every thing was sold by auction, and my parents were turned out of doors with-

out a farthing in the world. I was then in the sixth year of my age, and remember well the distressed and destitute condition that we were in. At length the late worthy Mr Brydon of Crosslee took compassion upon 'us,—and, taking a short lease of the farm of Et-trickhouse, placed my father there as his shepherd, and thus afforded him the means of supporting us in life for a time. This gentleman continued to interest himself in our welfare until the day of his untimely death, when we lost the best friend that we had in the world. It was on this mournful occasion that I wrote the “ *Dialogue in a Country Church-Yard.*” *

At such an age, it cannot be expected that I should have made great progress in literature. The school-house, however, being almost at our door, I had attended it for a short time,—and had the honour of standing at the head of a juvenile class, who read the Shorter Catechism and Proverbs of Solomon. At the next Whitsunday after our expulsion from the farm, I was obliged to go to service ; and, being only seven years of age, was hired by a farmer in the neighbourhood to herd a few cows. Next year, my parents took me home during the winter quarter, and put me to school with a lad named Ker, who was teaching the children of a neighbouring farmer. Here I advanced so far as to get into the class who read in the Bible. I had likewise, for some time before my quarter was

* This worthy man was killed by the fall of a tree.

out, tried writing ; and had horribly defiled several sheets of paper with copy-lines, every letter of which was nearly an inch in length.

Thus terminated my education. After this I was never another day at any school whatever. In all I had spent about half a year at it. It is true, my former master denied me ; and when I was only twenty years of age, said, if he was called to make oath, he would swear I never was at his school. However, I know I was at it for two or three months ; and I do not choose to be deprived of the honour of having attended the school of my native parish ; nor yet that old John Beattie should lose the honour of such a scholar. I was again, that very spring, sent away to my old occupation of herding cows. This employment, the worst and lowest known in our country, I was engaged in for several years under sundry masters, till at length I got into the more honourable one of keeping sheep. There is one circumstance, which has led some to imagine that my abilities as a servant had not been exquisite ; namely, that when I was fifteen years of age I had served a dozen masters—which circumstance I, myself, am rather willing to attribute to my having gone to service so young, that I was yearly growing stronger, and consequently adequate to a harder task and an increase of wages : for I do not remember of ever having served a master who refused giving me a verbal recommendation to the next, especially for my inoffensive behaviour. This character, which I, some

way or other, got at my very first outset, has, in some degree, attended me ever since, and has certainly been of utility to me ; yet, though Solomon avers that " a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches," I declare that I have never been so much benefited by mine, but that I would have chosen the latter by many degrees. From some of my masters I received very hard usage ; in particular, while with one shepherd, I was often nearly exhausted with hunger and fatigue. All this while I neither read nor wrote ; nor had I access to any book save the Bible. I was greatly taken with our version of the Psalms of David, learned the most of them by heart, and have a great partiality for them unto this day. Every little pittance that I earned of wages was carried directly to my parents, who supplied me with what clothes I had. These were often scarcely worthy of the appellation. In particular, I remember of being exceedingly scarce of shirts : time after time I had but two, which grew often so bad that I was obliged to quit wearing them altogether ; for when I put them on, they hung down in long tassels as far as my heels. At these times I certainly made a very grotesque figure ; for, on quitting the shirt, I could never induce my trews, or lower vestments, to keep up to their proper sphere. There were no braces in those days. When fourteen years of age, I saved five shillings of my wages, with which I bought an old violin. This occupied all my leisure hours, and has been my favourite amusement ever since. I

had commonly no spare time from labour during the day ; but when I was not over-fatigued, I generally spent an hour or two every night in sawing over my favourite old Scottish tunes—my bed being always in stables and cow-houses, I disturbed nobody but myself. This brings to my remembrance an anecdote, the consequence of one of these nocturnal endeavours at improvement.

When serving with Mr Scott of Singlee, there happened to be a dance one evening, at which a number of the friends and neighbours of the family were present. I, being admitted into the room as a spectator, was all attention to the music ; and, on the company breaking up, I retired to my stable-loft, and fell to essaying some of the tunes to which I had been listening. The musician going out on some necessary business, and not being aware that another of the same craft was so near him, was not a little surprised when the tones of my old violin assailed his ears. At first he took it for the late warbles of his own ringing through his head ; but, on a little attention, he, to his horror and astonishment, perceived that the sounds were real,—and that the tunes, which he had lately been playing with so much skill, were now murdered by some invisible being hard by him. Such a circumstance at that dead hour of the night, and when he was unable to discern from what quarter the sounds proceeded, convinced him all at once that it was a delusion of the devil ; and, suspecting his intentions from so much fa-

miliarity, he fled precipitately into the hall, with disordered garments, and in the utmost perturbation, to the no small mirth of Mr Scott, who declared, that he had lately been considerably stunned himself by the same discordant sounds.

From Singlee, I went to Elibank upon Tweed, where, with Mr Laidlaw, I found my situation more easy and agreeable than it had ever been. I staid there three half-years—a term longer than usual ; and from thence went to Willenslee, to Mr Laidlaw's father, with whom I served as a shepherd two years,—having been for some seasons preceding employed in working with horses, thrashing, &c.

It was while serving here, in the eighteenth year of my age, that I first got a perusal of "The Life and Adventures of Sir William Wallace," and "The Gentle Shepherd ;" and though immoderately fond of them, yet (what you will think remarkable in one who hath since dabbled so much in verses) I could not help regretting deeply that they were not in prose, that every body might have understood them ; or, I thought if they had been in the same kind of metre with the Psalms, I could have borne with them. The truth is, I made exceedingly slow progress in reading them. The little reading that I had learned I had nearly lost, and the Scottish dialect quite confounded me ; so that, before I got to the end of a line, I had commonly lost the rhyme of the preceding one ; and if I came to a triplet, a thing of which I had no conception, I com-

monly read to the foot of the page without perceiving that I had lost the rhyme altogether. I thought the author had been straitened for rhymes, and had just made a part of it do as well as he could without them. Thus, after I had got through both works, I found myself much in the same predicament with the man of Eskdalemuir, who had borrowed Bailey's Dictionary from his neighbour. On returning it, the lender asked him what he thought of it. "I dinna ken, man," replied he; "I have read it all through, but canna say that I understand it; it is the most confused book that ever I saw in my life!" The late Mrs Laidlaw of Willenslee took some notice of me, and frequently gave me books to read while tending the ewes; these were chiefly theological. The only one, that I remember any thing of, is "Bishop Burnet's Theory of the Conflagration of the Earth." Happy it was for me that I did not understand it! for the little of it that I did understand had nearly overturned my brain altogether. All the day I was pondering on the grand millenium, and the reign of the saints; and all the night dreaming of new heavens and a new earth—the stars in horror, and the world in flames! Mrs Laidlaw also gave me sometimes the newspapers, which I pored on with great earnestness—beginning at the date, and reading straight on, through advertisements of houses and lands, balm of Gilead, and every thing; and, after all, was often no wiser than when I began. To give you some farther idea of the progress I had made in literature—I

was about this time obliged to write a letter to my elder brother, and, having never drawn a pen for such a number of years, I had actually forgot how to make sundry of the letters of the alphabet: these I had either to print, or to patch up the words in the best way I could without them.

At Whitsunday 1790, being still only in the eighteenth year of my age, I left Willenslee, and hired myself to Mr Laidlaw of Blackhouse, with whom I served as a shepherd ten years. The kindness of this gentleman to me it would be the utmost ingratitude in me ever to forget; for, indeed, it was much more like that of a father than a master,—and it is not improbable that I should have been there still, had it not been for the following circumstance.—

My brother William had, for some time before that, occupied the farm of Ettrickhouse, where he resided with our parents; but having taken a wife, and the place not suiting two families, he took another residence, and gave up the farm to me. The lease expiring at Whitsunday 1803, our possession was taken by a wealthier neighbour. The first time that I attempted to write verses was in the spring of the year 1793. Mr Laidlaw having a number of valuable books, which were all open to my perusal, I about this time began to read with considerable attention,—and no sooner did I begin to read so as to understand, than, rather prematurely, I began to write. The first thing that ever I attempted was a poetical epistle to a stu-

dent of divinity, an acquaintance of mine. It was a piece of most fulsome flattery, and mostly composed of borrowed lines and sentences from Dryden's *Virgil*, and Harvey's *Life of Bruce*. I scarcely remember one line of it.

But the first thing that ever I composed, that was really my own, was a rhyme, entitled, "*An Address to the Duke of Buccleugh, in beha'f o' mysel' and ither poor Fock.*"

In the same year, after a deal of pains, I finished a song, called, "*The Way that the World goes on,*" and "*Wattie and Geordie's Foreign Intelligence,*" an Eclogue. These were my first year's productions, and in all respects miserably bad ; and having continued to write on ever since, often without either rhyme or reason, my pieces have multiplied exceedingly. Being little conversant in books, and far less in men and manners, the local circumstances, on which some of the pieces which I have sent to you are founded, may not be unentertaining. It was from a conversation that I had with an old woman from Lochaber, of the name of Cameron, on which I founded the story of "*Glengyle,*" a Ballad, and likewise the ground plot of "*The Happy Swains,*" a Pastoral, in four parts.— This, which I suppose you have never read, is a dramatic piece of great length, full of trifles, quaint conceits, and blunders ; part of the latter were owing to the old woman, on whose word I depended, and who

must have been as ignorant of the leading incidents of the year 1746 as I was.

In 1795, I began "*The Scotch Gentleman*," a Comedy, in five long acts ; after having been summoned to Selkirk, as a witness against some persons suspected of fishing in close time. This piece, which you have seen, is, like all the rest, full of faults ; yet, on reading it to an Ettrick audience, which I have several times done, it never failed to produce the most extraordinary convulsions of laughter ; though I was sometimes afraid that the laugh was rather at *me* than at the circumstances of the plot. The whole of the third act is taken up with the examination of the fishers ; and many of the questions asked, and answers given in court, are literally copied. Whether my manner of writing it out was new, I know not, but it was not without singularity. Having very little spare time from my flock, which was unruly enough, I folded and stitched a few sheets of paper, which I carried in my pocket. I had no inkhorn ; but, in place of it, I borrowed a small vial, which I fixed in a hole in the breast of my waistcoat ; and having a cork affixed by a piece of twine, it answered the purpose fully as well. Thus equipped, whenever a leisure minute or two offered, I had nothing ado but to sit down and write my thoughts as I found them. This is still my invariable practice in writing prose ; I cannot make out one sentence by study, without the pen in my hand to catch the ideas as they arise. I never write two copies of the same thing.

My manner of composing poetry is very different, and, I believe, much more singular. Let the piece be of what length it will, I compose and correct it wholly in my mind, or on a slate, ere ever I put pen to paper, and then I write it down as fast as the A, B, C. When once it is written, it remains in that state ; it being, as you very well know, with the utmost difficulty that I can be brought to alter one syllable, which I think is partly owing to the above practice.

It is a fact, that, by a long acquaintance with any poetical piece, we become perfectly reconciled to its faults. The numbers, by frequently repeating, wear smoother to our minds ; and the ideas having expanded, by reflection on each particular scene or incident therein described, the mind cannot, without reluctance, consent to the alteration of any part of it : for instance, how is the Scottish public likely to receive an improved edition of the Psalms of David, faulty as they are ?

My friend, Mr William Laidlaw, hath often remonstrated to me, in vain, on the necessity of a revision of my pieces ; but, in spite of him, I held fast my integrity : I said I would try to write the next better, but that should remain as it was. He was the only person who, for many years, ever pretended to discover the least merit in my essays, either in verse or prose ; and, as he never failed to have plenty of them about him, he took the opportunity of showing them to every person, whose capacity he supposed adequate to judge

of their merits : but it was all to no purpose ; he could never make a proselyte to his opinion of any note, save one, who, in a little time, apostatized, and left us as we were. He even went so far as to break with some of his correspondents altogether, who persisted in their obstinacy. All this had not the least effect upon me ; as long as I had his approbation and my own, which last never failed me, I continued to persevere. At length he had the good fortune to appeal to you, who were pleased to back him ; and he came off triumphant, declaring, that the world should henceforth judge for themselves for him.

I have often opposed his proposals with such obstinacy, that I was afraid of losing his countenance altogether ; but none of these things had the least effect upon him ; his friendship continued unimpaired, attended with the most tender assiduities for my welfare ; and I am now convinced, that he is better acquainted with my nature and propensities than I am myself. I have wandered insensibly from my subject ; but to return.—In the spring of the year 1796, as Alexander Laidlaw, a neighbouring shepherd, my brother William, and myself, were resting on the side of a hill above Ettrick church, I happened, in the course of our conversation, to drop some hints of my superior talents in poetry. William said, that, as to putting words into rhyme, it was a thing which he never could do to any sense ; but that, if I liked to enter the lists with him in blank verse, he would take me up for any bet

that I pleased. Laidlaw declared, that he would venture likewise. This being settled, and the judges named, I accepted the challenge ; but a dispute arising what was to be the subject, we were obliged to resort to the following mode of decision : Ten subjects were named, and lots cast, which was to be the topic ; and, amongst them all, that which fell to be elucidated by our matchless pens, was, *the stars* !—things which we knew little more about, than merely that they were burning and twinkling over us, and to be seen every night when the clouds were away. I began with high hopes and great warmth, and in a week declared mine ready for the comparison ; Laidlaw announced his next week ; but my brother made us wait a full half year ; and then, on being urged, presented his unfinished. The arbiters were then dispersed, and the cause was never properly judged ; but those to whom they were shown, rather gave the preference to my brother's.—This is certain, that it was far superior to any of the other two in the sublimity of the ideas ; but, besides being in bad measure, it was often bombastical. The title of it was “ *Urania's Tour* ;” of Laidlaw's, “ *Astronomical Thoughts* ;” and mine, “ *Reflections on a View of the Nocturnal Heavens* .

Alexander Laidlaw and I tried, after the same manner, a paraphrase on the 117th Psalm, in English verse. I continued annually to add numbers of smaller pieces of poetry and songs to my collection, mostly on subjects purely ideal, or else legendary. I had, from

my childhood, been affected by the frequent return of a violent inward complaint ; and it attacked me once in a friend's house, at a distance from home, and, increasing to an inflammation, all hopes were given up of my recovery. While I was lying here, in the greatest agony, about the dead of the night, I had the mortification of seeing the old woman, who watched over me, fall into a swoon, from a supposition that she saw my *wraith* :—a spirit which, the vulgar suppose, haunts the abodes of such as are instantly to die, in order to carry off the soul as soon as it is disengaged from the body.—And, next morning, I overheard a consultation about borrowing sheets to lay me in at my decease ; but Almighty God, in his providence, deceived both them and the officious spirit : for, by the help of an able physician, I recovered, and have never since been troubled with the distemper. It was while confined to my bed from the effects of this dreadful malady, that I composed the song, beginning, “ *Fareweel ye Grots, fareweel ye Glens.*”

In the year 1800, I began and finished the two first acts of a tragedy, which I called “ *The Castle in the Wood ;*” and, flattering myself that it would be a masterpiece, I showed it to Mr William Laidlaw, my literary confessor. On returning it, he declared that it was faulty in the extreme ; and observing that he had drawn black strokes through several of my most elaborate speeches, I cursed his stupidity, threw the work away, and never added another line. My acquaint-

ances hereabouts imagine, that the Pastoral of "*Willie an' Keatie*," published with others in 1801, was founded on an amour of mine own, and I cannot say that their surmises are entirely groundless. The publication of this pamphlet was one of the most unadvised actions that I ever committed. Having attended the Edinburgh market one Monday, with a number of sheep for sale, and being unable to dispose of them all, I put the remainder into a park until the market on Wednesday. Not knowing how to pass the interim, it came into my head that I would write a poem or two from my memory, and get them printed. The thought had no sooner struck me, than it was put in practice ; and I was obliged to select, not the best poems, but those that I remembered best. I wrote several others during my short stay, and gave them all to a person to print at my expense ; and, having sold off my sheep on Wednesday morning, I returned to the Forest. I saw no more of my Poems, until I received word that there were one thousand copies of them thrown off. I knew no more about publishing than the man of the moon ; and the only motive that influenced me was, the gratification of my vanity by seeing my works in print. But, no sooner did the first copy come to hand, than my eyes were open to the folly of my conduct ; for, on comparing it with the MS. which I had at home, I found many of the stanzas omitted, others misplaced, and typographical errors abounding in every page.

Thus were my first productions pushed headlong into the world, without either patron or preface, or even apprizing the public that such a thing was coming, and “unhoussell’d, unanointed, unannealed, with all their imperfections on their heads.” “*Willie an’ Keatie*,” however, had the honour of being copied into some periodical publications of the time, as a favourable specimen of the work, but, in my opinion, the poem succeeding it was greatly superior. Indeed, all of them were sad stuff, although I judged them to be exceedingly good. In 1802, “*The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*” came into my hands; and, though I was even astonished to find such exact copies of many old songs, which I had heard sung by people who never could read a song, but got them handed down by tradition—and likewise at the conformity of the notes to the traditions and superstitions, which are, even to this day, far from being eradicated from the minds of the people amongst our mountains—yet, I confess, I was not satisfied with many of the imitations of the ancients. I immediately chose a number of traditional facts, and set about imitating the manners of the ancients myself. These ballads you have seen; and as they are the first things which you have approved, I have some thoughts of intruding myself once more on the public.

The only other local circumstance, on which another of my pieces is founded, was the following:—In 1801, I went to Edinburgh on foot; and being be-

nighted at Straiton, I lodged there. The landlord had a son deranged in his mind, whom he described as having been formerly sensible and docile, but whose behaviour was now very extravagant ; for he would go out at night, and attack the moon with great rudeness and vociferation. I was so taken with his condition, that I tarried another night on my way home, to contemplate his manner and ideas a little farther. Thinking that a person in such a state, with a proper cause assigned, was a fit subject for a poem, before I reached home I had all the incidents arranged, and a good many verses composed, of the pastoral-tale of "*Sandy Tbd,*" which, I think, is one of the best of my early pieces.

Most of my prose essays have been written in an epistolary form : you may have seen, by the papers, that I gained two prizes from the Highland Society for Essays connected with the rearing and management of sheep. I have gone three journies into the Highlands, two on foot, and one on horseback ; at each time penetrating farther, until I have seen a great part of that rough but valuable country. I have copied the most of my journals into letters for your perusal, and will proceed with the rest at my leisure. I have always had a great partiality for the Highlands of Scotland, and now intend going to settle in one of its most distant corners. The issue of such an adventure time only can reveal.

THE above is the substance of three letters, written in the same year, and alluding mostly to Poetical Trifles in my friend's hands. Since that time I have experienced a very unexpected reverse of fortune. After my return from the Highlands in June last, I put every thing in readiness for my departure to settle in Harries ; and I wrote and published my "*Farewell to Ettrick*," wherein the real sentiments of my heart at that time are simply related, which constitutes its only claim to merit. It would be tedious and trifling, were I to relate all the disagreeable circumstances which ensued ; suffice it to say, that my scheme was absolutely frustrated.

Being miserably disappointed, and vexed at being thus baffled in an undertaking about which I had talked so much, to avoid a great many disagreeable questions and explanations, I went to England during the remainder of the summer. On my return to Scotland, having lost all the money that I had made by a regular and industrious life, and in one week too, I again cheerfully hired myself as a shepherd, with Mr Harkness of Mitchelslacks, in Nithsdale. It was while here that I published "*The Mountain Bard*," containing all the ballads which follow, save a very few, and such other poems and songs as I liked best, to make it a reasonable size.

Mr Scott had encouraged the publication of the work in some letters that he sent me, consequently I went to Edinburgh to see about it. He went with

me to Mr Constable, who received me very kindly, but told me frankly, that my poetry would not sell. I said, I thought it was as good as any body's I had seen. He said, that might be, but that nobody's poetry would sell; it was the worst stuff that came to market, and that he found; but, as I appeared to be a gay queer chiel, if I would procure him 200 subscribers, he would publish my work for me, and give me as much for it as he could. I did not like the subscribers much; but, having no alternative, I accepted the conditions. Before the work was ready for publication, I had got above 500 subscribers; and Mr Constable, who, by that time, had conceived a better opinion of the work, gave me half-guinea copies for all my subscribers, and a letter for a small sum over and above. I have forgot how much; but, upon the whole, he acted with great liberality. He gave me, likewise, that same year, £86, for that celebrated work, *HOGG ON SHEEP*; and I was now richer than I had ever been before.

I had no regular plan of delivering those copies that were subscribed for, but sent them simply to the people, intending to take their money in return; but though some paid me double, triple, and even ten times the price, about one-third of my subscribers thought proper to take the copies for nothing, never paying them to this day.

Being now master of nearly £300, I went perfectly mad. I first took one pasture farm, at ex-

actly one half more than it was worth, having been cheated into it by a great rascal, who meant to rob me of all I had, and which, in the course of one year, he effected by dint of law. But, in the mean time, having taken another extensive farm, I found myself fairly involved in business far above my capital. It would have required at least £1000 for every £100 that I possessed, to have managed all I had taken in hand ; So I got every day out of one strait and confusion into a worse. I blundered and struggled on for three years between these two places, giving up all thoughts of poetry or literature of any kind. I have detailed these circumstances in a larger MS. work ; but, though they are laughable, they must be omitted here, as it is only a short sketch of my *literary life* that I can extract into this introduction.

Finding myself, at length, fairly run aground, I gave my creditors all that I had, or rather suffered them to take it, and came off and left them. I never asked any settlement, which would not have been refused me ; and severely have I smarted for that neglect since. None of these matters had the least effect in depressing my spirits—I was generally rather most cheerful when most unfortunate. On returning again to Ettrick Forest, I found the countenances of all my friends altered, and even those whom I had loved, and trusted most, disowned me, and told me so to my face ; but I laughed at and despised these persons, resolving to shew them, by and by, that they were in the wrong.

Having appeared as a poet, and a speculative farmer beside, no one would now employ me as a shepherd. I even applied to some of my old masters, but they refused me, and for a whole winter I found myself without employment, and without money, in my native country; therefore, in February 1810, in utter desperation, I took my plaid about my shoulders, and marched away to Edinburgh, determined, since no better could be, to push my fortune as a literary man. It is true, I had estimated my poetical talent high enough, but I had resolved to use it only as a staff, never as a crutch; and would have kept that resolve, had I not been driven to the reverse. On going to Edinburgh, I found that my poetical talents were rated nearly as low there as my shepherd qualities were in Ettrick. It was in vain that I applied to newsmongers, booksellers, editors of magazines, &c. for employment. Any of these were willing enough to accept of my lucubrations, and give them publicity, but then there was no money going—not a farthing; and this suited me very ill.

I again applied to Mr Constable, to publish a volume of songs for me; for I had nothing else by me but the songs of my youth, having given up all these exercises so long. He was rather averse to the expedient; but he had a sort of kindness for me, and did not like to refuse; so, after waiting on him three or four times, he condescended on publishing an edition, and giving me half profits. He published 1000 copies, at five shillings each; but he never gave me any thing; and as I feared

the concern might not have proved a good one, I never asked any remuneration.

The name of this work was the Forest Minstrel ; of which about two thirds of the songs were my own, the rest furnished by correspondents—a number of them by the ingenious Mr T. Cunningham. In general they are not good, but the worst of them are all mine, for I inserted every ranting rhyme that I had made in my youth, to please the circles about the fire-sides in the country ; and all this time I had never been once in any polished society—had read next to none—was now in the 38th year of my age, and knew no more of human life or manners than a child. I was a sort of natural songster, without another advantage on earth. Fain would I have done something ; but, on finding myself shunned by every one, I determined to push my own fortune independent of booksellers, whom I now began to view as beings obnoxious to all genius. My plan was, to begin a literary weekly paper, a work for which I certainly was rarely qualified, when the above facts are considered. I tried Walker & Greig, and several printers, offering them security to print it for me.—No ; not one of them would print it without a bookseller's name at it as publisher. “ D—n them,” said I to myself, as I was running from one to another, “ the folks here are all combined in a body.” Mr Constable laughed at me exceedingly, and finally told me, he wished me too well to encourage such a thing. Mr Ballantyne was rather more civil, and got off by sub-

scribing for so many copies, and giving me credit for £10 worth of paper. David Brown would have nothing to do with it, unless some gentlemen, whom he named, should contribute. At length, I found an honest man, James Robertson, a bookseller in Nicolson Street, whom I had never before seen or heard of, who undertook it at once on my own terms; and on the 1st of September, 1810, my first number made its appearance on a quarto demy sheet, price fourpence.

A great number were sold, and many hundreds delivered gratis; but one of Robertson's boys, a great rascal, had demanded the price in full for all that he delivered gratis. They showed him the imprint, that they were to be delivered gratis; "so they are," said he; "I take nothing for the delivery; but I must have the price of the paper, if you please."

This money that the boy brought me, consisting of a few shillings and an immense number of halfpence, was the first and only money I had pocketed of my own making, since my arrival in Edinburgh in February last. On the publication of the two first numbers, I deemed I had as many subscribers as, at all events, would secure the work from being dropped; but, on the publication of my third or fourth number, I have forgot which, it was so indecorous, that no fewer than seventy-three subscribers gave up. This was a sad blow for me; but, as usual, I despised the fastidity and affectation of the people, and continued

my work. It proved a fatal oversight for the paper, for all those who had given in set themselves against it with the utmost inveteracy. The literary ladies, in particular, agreed; in full divan, that I would never write a sentence which deserved to be read. A reverend friend of mine has often repeated my remark on being told of this—"Gaping deevils! wha cares what they say! If I leeve ony time, I'll let them see the contrair o' that."

My publisher, James Robertson, was a kind-hearted, confused body, who loved a joke and a dram. He sent for me every day about one o'clock, to consult about the publication; and then we uniformly went down to a dark house in the Cowgate, where we drank whisky and ate rolls with a number of printers, the dirtiest and leanest-looking men I had ever seen. My youthful habits having been so regular, I could not stand this; and though I took care, as I thought, to drink very little, yet, when I went out, I was at times so dizzy, I could scarcely walk; and the worst thing of all was, I felt that I was beginning to relish it.

Whenever a man thinks seriously of a thing, he generally thinks aright. I thought frequently of these habits and connexions, and found that they never would do; and that, instead of pushing myself forward, as I wished to do, I was going straight to the devil. I said nothing about this to my respectable acquaintances, nor do I know if they ever knew or

suspected what was going on ; but, on some pretence or other, I resolved to cut all connexion with Robertson ; and sorely against his will, gave the printing to the Messrs Aikman, then proprietors of the Star newspaper, showing them the list of subscribers, of which they took their chance, and promised me half profits. At the conclusion of the year, instead of granting me any profits, they complained of being so much minus, and charged me with the half of the loss. This I refused to pay, unless they could give me an account of all the numbers published, on the sale of which there should have been a good profit. This they could not do ; so I paid nothing, and received as little. I had, however, a good deal to pay to Robertson, who likewise asked more ; so that, after a year's literary drudgery, I found myself a loser rather than a gainer.

The name of this periodical work was *THE SPY*. I continued it for a year, and to this day I cannot help regarding it as a literary curiosity. It has, doubtless, but little merit ; but yet I think, that all circumstances considered, it is rather wonderful. In my farewell paper, I see the following sentence occurs, when speaking of the few who stood friends to the work :—

“ They have, at all events, the honour of patronising an undertaking quite new in the records of literature ; for, that a common shepherd, who never was at school ; who went to service at seven years of age,

and could neither read nor write with any degree of accuracy when twenty ; yet who, smit with an unconquerable thirst after knowledge, should leave his native mountains, and his flocks to wander where they chose, come to the metropolis with his plaid wrapped about his shoulders, and all at once set up for a connoisseur in manners, taste, and genius—has much more the appearance of a romance than a matter of fact ; yet a matter of fact it certainly is, and such a person is the editor of *THE SPY*."

I begun it without asking, or knowing of any assistance ; but when Mr and Mrs Gray saw it was on foot, they interested themselves in it with all their power, and wrote a number of essays for it. Several other gentlemen likewise contributed a paper quietly now and then, and among others Robert Sym, Esq. which I never discovered till after the work was discontinued. The greater part, however, is my own writing, and consists of 415 quarto pages, double columned, no easy task for one to accomplish in a year. I speak of this work as one that *existed*, for it flew abroad, like the sybil's papers, every week, and I believe there are not above five complete copies existing ; and, as it never again will be reprinted, if the scarcity of a work makes it valuable, no one can be more so to exist at all.

All this while there was no man who entered into my views, and supported them, save Mr John Grieve, a friend, whose affection neither misfortune nor

imprudence could once shake. Evil speakers had no effect on him. We had been acquainted from our youth ; and he had formed his judgment of me as a man and a poet ; and from that nothing could ever make him abate one item. Mr Grieve's opinion of me was by far too partial, for it amounted to this, that he never conceived any effort in poetry above my reach, if I would set my mind to it ; but my carelessness and indifference he constantly regretted and deprecated. During the first six months that I resided in Edinburgh, I lived with him, and his partner, Mr Scott, who, on a longer acquaintance, became as firmly attached to me as Mr Grieve ; and, I believe, as much so as to any other man alive. We three have had many very happy evenings together ; we indeed were seldom separate when it was possible to meet. They suffered me to want for nothing, either in money or clothes ; and I did not even need to ask these. Mr Grieve was always the first to notice my wants, and prevent them. In short, they would not suffer me to be obliged to one but themselves for the value of a farthing ; and without this sure support, I could never have fought my way in Edinburgh. I was fairly starved into it, and if it had not been Messrs Grieve and Scott, would, in a very short time, have been starved out of it again.

The next thing in which I became deeply interested, in a literary way, was the *FORUM*, a debating society,

them to friends who soon procured me the requisite number. But, before this time, one George Goldie, a young bookseller in Princes Street, a lad of some taste, had become acquainted with me at the Forum, and earnestly requested to see my MS. I gave it to him with reluctance, being predetermined to have nothing to do with him. He had not, however, well looked into the work till he thought he perceived something above common place; and, when I next saw him, he was intent on being the publisher of the work, offering me as much as Mr Constable, and all the subscribers to myself over and above. I was very loath to part with Mr Constable; but the terms were so different, that I was obliged to think of it. I tried him again; but he had differed with Mr Scott, and I found him in such bad humour, that he would do nothing farther than curse all the poets, and declare, that he had met with more ingratitude among literary men than all the rest of the human race. Of course Goldie got the work, and it made its appearance in the spring of 1813.

As I said, nobody had seen the work; and, on the day after it was published, I came up to Edinburgh as anxious as a man could be. I walked sometimes about the streets, and read the title of my book on the booksellers' windows, yet I durst not go into any of the shops. I was like a man between death and life, waiting for the sentence of the jury. The first encouragement that I got, was from my countryman, Mr William Dunlop, spirit merchant, who, on observing me going

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set to a hill of heather in a warm spring day, and no one knows where it will stop. From that day forward every one has spoken well of the work ; and every review praised its general features, save the Eclectic, which, in the number for 1813, tried to hold it up to ridicule and contempt. Mr Jeffery ventured not a word about it, either good or bad, himself, until the year after, when it had fairly got into a second and third edition. He then gave a very judicious and sensible review of it ; but he committed a most horrible blunder, in classing Mr Tenant, the author of *Anster Fair*, and me together, as two self-taught geniuses ; whereas there was not one point of resemblance—Tenant being a better educated man than the reviewer himself, was not a little affronted at being classed with me. From that day to this Mr Jeffery has taken no notice of any thing that I have published, which I think can hardly be expected to do him any honour at the long run. I should like the worst poem that I have since published, to stand a fair comparison with some that he has strained himself to bring forward. It is a pity that any literary connexion, which with the one party might be unavoidable, should ever prejudice one valued friend and acquaintance against another. In the heart-burnings of party spirit, the failings of great minds are more exposed than in all other things in the world put together.

Mr Goldie had little capital, and less interest among the trade ; nevertheless, he did all for my work that

lay in his power, and sold two editions of it in a short time. About that period, there was a general failure took place among the secondary class of booksellers, and it was reported that Goldie was so much involved with some of the houses, that it was impossible he could escape destruction. A third edition of my poem was wanted, and, without more ado, I went and offered it to Mr Constable. We closed a bargain at once, and the book was sent to Mr Ballantyne to print. But after a part was thrown off, Goldie got notice of the transaction, and was neither to hold nor bind, pretending that he had been exceedingly ill used. He waited on Mr Constable one hour, and corresponded with him the next, till he induced him to give up the bargain. It was in vain that I remonstrated, affirming that the work was my own, and I would give it to whom I pleased. I had no one to take my part, and I was browbeat out of it—Goldie alleging, that I had no reason to complain, as he entered precisely into Constable's terms, and had run all the risk of the former editions. I durst not say, that he was going to break, and never pay me ; so I was obliged to suffer the edition to be printed off in Goldie's name. This was exceedingly ill done of him—nothing could be more cruel—and I was grieved that he did so, for I had a good opinion of him. The edition had not been lodged in his premises a week before he stopped, and yet, in that time, he had contrived to sell, or give away, more than one-half of the copies ; and thus all the lit-

the money that I had gained, which I was so proud of, and on which I depended for my subsistence, and the settling of some old farming debts that were pressing hard upon me, vanished from my grasp at once.

It was on the occasion of Mr Blackwood being appointed one of the trustees upon the bankrupt estate that I was first introduced to him. I found him and the two Messrs Bridges deeply interested in my case. I shall never forget their kindness and attention to my interests at that unfortunate period. I had likewise, before this time, been introduced to most of the great literary characters in the metropolis, and lived with them on terms of intimacy, finding myself more and more a welcome guest at all their houses. However, I was careful not to abuse their indulgence; for, with the exception of a few intimate friends, I made myself exceedingly scarce. I was indebted for these introductions, in a great degree, to the Reverend Robert Morehead, one of the most amiable men I have ever known, and to two worthy ladies of the name of Lowes. I have written out, at great length, my opinion of all the characters of these literary gentlemen, with traits of their behaviour towards each other, principally from reports on which I could depend, and what I knew of their plans and parties—but this would fill a volume as large as this work.

On the appearance of Mr Wilson's *Isle of Palms*, I was so greatly taken with many of his fanciful and visionary scenes, descriptive of bliss and wo, that it had

a tendency to divest me occasionally of all worldly feelings. I reviewed this poem, as well as many others, in a Scottish Review then going on in Edinburgh, and was exceedingly anxious to meet with the author ; but this I tried in vain, for the space of six months. All I could learn of him was, that he was a man from the mountains in Wales, or the west of England, with hair like eagles' feathers, and nails like birds' claws ; a red beard, and an uncommon degree of wildness in his looks. Wilson was then utterly unknown in Edinburgh, except slightly to Mr Walter Scott, who never introduces any one person to another, nor judges it of any avail. However, having no other shift left, I sat down and wrote him a note, telling him that I wished much to see him, and if he wanted to see me, he might come and dine with me at my lodgings in the Road of Gabriel, at four ; and if not, he might stay at home. He accepted the invitation, and dined with Grieve and me, and I found him so much a man according to my own heart, that for many years we were seldom twenty-four hours asunder, when in town. I afterwards went and visited him, staying with him a month at his seat in Westmoreland, where we had some curious doings among the gentlemen and poets of the lakes. It is a pity I have not room here to give a description of all these scenes, being obliged, according to my plan, to return to a subject far less interesting, namely, my own literary progress.

The Queen's Wake being now consigned to Messrs Murray and Blackwood, I fairly left it to its fate ; and they published a fourth edition, which was in fact not a new edition, but only the remainder of Goldie's third ; so that I gained an edition in the eyes of the world, although not to the weight of my purse, to which this edition in reality made no *addition*. It has, however, been a good work to me, and has certainly been read and admired much above what its merits warrant. My own opinion of it is, that it is a very imperfect and unequal work ; and if it were not for three of the ballads, which are rather of a redeeming quality, some of the rest are little better than trash. But, somehow or other, the plan proved extremely happy ; and though it was contrived solely for the purpose of stringing my miscellaneous ballads into a regular poem, happened to have a good effect, from keeping always up a double interest, both in the incidents of each tale, and in the success of the singer in the contest for the prize harp. The intermediate poetry between the ballads is all likewise middling good.

The same year in which I wrote the two musical dramas, I also wrote a tragedy, which was called *The Hunting of Badlewe* ; but of this Goldie only printed a few copies, to see how the public relished it. It was not favourably received ; but more of this hereafter.

Although it should rather have been mentioned at a period subsequent to this, I may take notice here, that the *fifth edition* of the *Queen's Wake*, in royal octavo

with plates, was a plan concocted by Mr Blackwood to bring me in a little money. He was assisted in this undertaking by Charles Sharpe, Esq.; Mr Walter Scott; and several other friends; but most of all by the indefatigable Mr David Bridges, junior, a man that often effects more in one day than many others can do in six, and who is, in fact, a greater prodigy than any self-taught painter or poet in the kingdom.

The only other anecdote which I have recorded in my Diary relating to this poem, is one about the dedication. As it related to the amusements of a young queen, I thought I could dedicate it to no one so appropriately as to her royal and beautiful descendant, the Princess Charlotte; which I did. By the advice of some friends, I got a large paper copy bound up in an elegant antique style, which cost three guineas, and sent it in a present to her Royal Highness, directing it to the care of Dr Fisher, Bishop of Salisbury, and requesting him to present it to his royal pupil. His Lordship was neither at the pains to acknowledge the receipt of the work or my letter, nor, I dare say, to deliver it as directed. The dedication I have never had the heart to cancel, even now when she is no more, and I have let the original date remain.

During all this time I generally went a tour into the Highlands every summer, and always made a point of tarrying some time at Kinnaird-house in Athol, the seat of Chalmers Izett, Esq. whose lady had taken an early interest in my fortunes, which no circumstance

has ever abated. I depended much on her advice and good taste ; and had I attended more to her friendly remonstrances, it would have been much better for me. In the summer of 1814, having been seized with a severe cold while there, it was arranged that I should reside at Kinnaird House two or three weeks ; and as Mrs Izett insisted that I should not remain idle, she conducted me up stairs one morning, and introduced me into a little study, furnished with books and writing materials. " Now," said she, " I do not wish you to curtail your fishing-hours, since you seem to delight so much in it, but whenever you have a spare hour, either evening or morning, you can retire to this place, either to read or write, as the humour suits you." " Since you will set me down to write," said I, " you must choose a subject for me, for I have nothing in hand, and have thought of nothing." " How can you be at a loss for a subject," returned she, " and that majestic river rolling beneath your eyes ?" " Well," said I, " though I consider myself exquisite at descriptions of nature, and mountain-scenery in particular, yet I am afraid that a poem wholly descriptive will prove dull and heavy." " You may make it the shorter," said she ; " only write something to prevent your mind from rusting."

Upon this I determined immediately to write a poem descriptive of the river Tay, and after spending about two hours considering in what verse I should write it,

I fixed on the stanza of Spenser. "That is the finest verse in the world," said I to myself; "it rolls off with such majesty and grandeur. What an effect it will have in the description of mountains, cataracts, and storms!"

I had also another motive for adopting it. I was fond of the Spenserian measure; but there was something in the best models that always offended my ear. It was owing to this.—I thought it so formed, that every verse ought to be a structure of itself, resembling an arch, of which the two meeting rhymes in the middle should represent the key-stone, and on these all the strength and flow of the verse should rest. On beginning this poem, therefore, I had the vanity to believe that I was going to give the world a new specimen of this stanza in its proper harmony. It was under these feelings that my poem of *MADOR OF THE MOOR* was begun, and in a very short time completed: but I left out to the extent of one whole book of the descriptive part. There is no doubt whatever, that my highest and most fortunate efforts in rhyme are contained in some of the descriptions of nature in that poem, and in the Ode to Superstition which follows it.

In the same year, and immediately on the finishing of the above poem, I conceived a plan for writing a volume of romantic poems, to be entitled *MIDSUMMER-NIGHT DREAMS*, and am sorry to this day that chance adulation prevented me from accomplishing my

design, for of all other subjects, there were none that suited the turn of my thoughts so well.

The first of these dreams that I wrote was **CONNEL OF DEE**, now published in the **Winter Evening Tales**, and the second was **THE PILGRIMS OF THE SUN**. It happened that a gentleman, Mr James Park of Greenock, on whose literary taste I had great reliance, came to Edinburgh for a few weeks about this time ; and, as we had been intimate acquaintances and correspondents for a number of years, I gave him a perusal of all my recent pieces in manuscript. His approbation of the **PILGRIMS OF THE SUN** was so decided, and so unqualified, that he prevailed with me to give up my design of the **Midsummer-Night Dreams**, and also that of publishing **Mador**, and to publish the former poem as an entire work by itself. This advice of my inestimable and regretted friend, though given in sincerity of heart, I am convinced was wrong ; but I believed every one that commended any of my works, and laughed at those who did otherwise, thinking, and asserting, that they had not sufficient discernment. Among other wild and visionary subjects, the **Pilgrims of the Sun** would have done very well, and might at least have been judged one of the best ; but, as an entire poem by itself, it bears a trait of extravagance, and affords no relief from the story of a visionary existence. After my literary blunders and miscarriages are a few months old, I can view them with as much indifference, and laugh at

them as heartily, as any of my neighbours. I have often felt, that Mary Lee reminded me of a beautiful country girl turned into an assembly in dishabille, "half-naked for a world's wonder," whose beauties might be gazed at, but were sure to be derided.

There were some circumstances attending the publication of this poem, which show the doings and the honour of that profession in a particular light. I called on my old friend, Mr Constable, from whom I had very ill will to part, and told him my design and views in publishing the poem. He received me with his usual kindness, and seemed to encourage the plan : but, in the meantime, said he was busy—and that if I would call back on Saturday, he would have time to think of it, and give me an answer. With the solicitude of a poor author, I was punctual to my hour on Saturday, and found Mr Constable sitting at his confined desk up stairs, and alone, which was a rare incident. He saluted me, held out his hand without lifting his eyes from the paper, and then, resuming his pen, he continued writing. I read the backs of some of the books on his shelves, and then spoke of my new poem ; but he would not deign to lift his eyes, or regard me. I tried to bring on a conversation by talking of the Edinburgh Review ; but all to no purpose. " Now, the devil confound the fellow," thought I to myself, " he will sit there scribbling till we are interrupted by some one coming to talk to him of business, and then I shall lose my opportunity—perhaps it is what he

wants! D—n him, if I thought he were not wanting my book, if I should not be as saucy as he is!" At length he turned his back to the window, with his face to me, and addressed me in a long set speech, a thing I never heard him do before. It had a great deal of speciousness in it, but with regard to its purport, I leave the world to judge. I pledge myself, that in this short Sketch of my Literary Life, as well as in the extended memoir, should that ever appear, to relate nothing but the downright truth. If any feel that they have done or said wrong, I cannot help it.

"By G—, Hogg, you are a very extraordinary fellow!" said he—"You are a man of very great genius, sir! I don't know if ever there was such another man born!" I looked down, and brushed my hat with my elbow; for what could any man answer to such an address. "Nay, it is all true, sir; I do not jest a word—I never knew such a genius in my life. I am told, that, since the publication of the Queen's Wake last year, you have three new poems, all as long, and greatly superior to that, ready for publication. By G—, sir, you will write Scott, and Byron, and every one of them, off the field."

"Let us alane o' your jibes, Maister Constable," said I, "and tell me at ance what ye're gaun to say about yon."

"I have been thinking seriously about your proposal, Hogg," said he; "and though you are the very sort of man whom I wish to encourage, yet I do not

think the work would be best in my hand. I am so deeply engaged, my dear sir, in large and ponderous works, that a small light work has no good chance in my hands at all. For the sake of the authors, I have often taken such works in hand—among others, your friend Mr Paterson's—and have been grieved that I had it not in my power to pay that minute attention to them, individually, that I wished to have done. The thing is impossible ! And then the authors come fretting on me ; nor will they believe that another bookseller can do much more for such works than I can. There is my friend, Mr Miller, for instance—he has sold three times as many of *Discipline* as perhaps I could have done.”—“ No, no,” said I, “ I'll deal none with Mr Miller : if you are not for the work yourself, I will find out one who will take it.”—“ I made the proposal in friendship,” said he : “ If you give the work to Miller, I shall do all for it the same as it were my own. I will publish it in all my catalogues, and in all my reviews and magazines, and I will send it abroad with all these to my agents in the country. I will be security for the price of it, should you and he deal ; so that, in transferring it to Miller in place of me, you only secure two interests in it in place of one.”

This was all so unobjectionable, that I could say nothing in opposition to it ; so we agreed on the price at one word, which was, I think, to be £80 for liberty to print 1000 copies. Mr Miller was sent for, who

complied with every thing as implicitly as if he had been Mr Constable's clerk, and without making a single observation. The bargain was fairly made out and concluded, the manuscript was put into Mr Miller's hands, and I left Edinburgh, leaving him a written direction how to forward the proofs. Week passed after week, and no proofs arrived. I grew impatient, it having been stipulated that the work was to be published in two months, and wrote to Mr Miller ; but I received no answer. I then wrote to a friend to inquire the reason. He waited on Mr Miller, he said, but received no satisfactory answer ; " the truth of the matter," added he,—“ is this : Mr Miller, I am privately informed, sent out your MS. among his Blue Stockings for their verdict. They have condemned the poem as extravagant nonsense.—Mr Miller has rued of his bargain, and will never publish the poem, unless he is sued at law.” How far this information was correct, I had no means of discovering ; but it vexed me exceedingly, as I had mentioned the transaction to all my friends, and how much I was pleased at the connexion. However, I waited patiently for two months, the time when it ought to have been published, and then I wrote Mr Miller a note, desiring him to put my work forthwith to the press, the time being now elapsed ; or, otherwise, to return me the manuscript. Mr Miller returned me the poem with a polite note, as if no bargain had existed, and I thought it below me ever to mention the circumstance again, either to him or Mr

Constable. As I never understood the real secret of this transaction, neither do I know whom to blame.—Mr Miller seemed all along to be acting on the ground of some secret arrangement with his neighbour, and it was perhaps by an arrangement of the same kind, that the poem was given up. But I only relate what I know.

Some time after this, Mr Blackwood introduced me to Mr John Murray, the London bookseller, with whom I was quite delighted ; and one night, after supping with him in Albany Street, I mentioned the transaction with Mr Miller. He said Mr Constable was to blame ; for as matters stood, he ought to have seen the bargain implemented ; but, at all events, it would be no loss to me, for he was willing to take the poem according to Mr Miller's bargain. There was nothing more said ; we at once agreed, and exchanged letters on it ; the work was put to press, and soon finished. But, alas ! for my unfortunate Pilgrim ! The running copy was sent up to Mr Murray in London ; and that gentleman, finding his critical friends of the same opinion with Mr Miller's Blue Stockings, would not allow his name to go on the work. It was in vain that Mr Blackwood urged, that it was a work of genius, however faulty, and it would be an honour for any bookseller to have his name at it.—Mr Murray had been informed, by those on whose judgment he could rely, that it was the most wretched poem that ever was written.

Mr Blackwood felt a delicacy in telling me this, and got a few friends to inform me of it in as delicate a way as possible. I could not, however, conceal my feelings, and maintained that the poem was a good one. Mr Grieve checked me by saying, it was impossible that I could be a better judge than both the literary people of Scotland and England—that they could have no interest in condemning the poem; and after what had happened, it was vain to augur any good of it. I said it would be long ere any of those persons who had condemned it would write one like it; and I was obliged to please myself with this fancy, and put up with the affront.

The poem came out, and was rather well received. I never met with any person, who really had read it, that did not like the poem; the reviewers praised it; and the Eclectic, in particular, gave it the highest commendation I ever saw bestowed on a work of genius. It was reprinted in two different towns in America, and 10,000 copies of it sold in that country. Mr Murray very honourably paid me the price agreed on three months before it was due; but the work sold heavily here, and neither my booksellers nor I have ever proposed a second edition. The trade were all, except Mr Blackwood, set against it, in defence of their own good taste. It is indeed a faulty poem, but I think no shame of it; neither, I trust, will any of my friends when I am no more.

My next literary adventure was the most extravagant of any. I took it into my head, that I would

collect a poem from every living author in Britain, and publish them in a neat and elegant volume, by which I calculated I might make my fortune. I either applied personally, or by letter, to Southey, Wilson, Wordsworth, Lloyde, Morehead, Pringle, Paterson, and several others ; all of whom sent me very ingenious and beautiful poems. Wordsworth afterwards reclaimed his ; and although Lord Byron and Rogers both promised, neither of them ever performed. I believe they intended it, but some other concerns of deeper moment had put it out of their heads. Mr Walter Scott absolutely refused to furnish me with even one verse, which I took exceedingly ill, as it frustrated my whole plan. What occasioned it, I do not know, as I accounted myself certain of his support from the beginning, and had never asked any thing of him all my life that he refused. It was in vain that I represented, that I had done as much for him, and would do ten times more if he required it. He remained firm in his denial, which I thought very hard ; so I left him in high dudgeon, sent him a very abusive letter, and would not speak to him again for many a day. I could not even endure to see him at a distance, I felt so degraded by the refusal ; and I was, at that time, more disgusted with all mankind than I had ever been before, or have ever been since.

I began, with a heavy heart, to look over the pieces I had received, and lost all hope of my project succeeding. They were, indeed, all very well ; but I did not

see that they possessed such merit as could give celebrity to any work ; and after considering them well, I fancied that I could write a better poem than any that had been sent or would be sent to me, and this so completely in the style of each poet, that it should not be known but for his own production. It was this conceit that suggested to me the idea of *THE POETIC MIRROR, OR LIVING BARDS OF BRITAIN*. I set to work with great glee, as the fancy had struck me, and, in a few days, I finished my imitations of Wordsworth and Lord Byron. Like a fool, I admired the latter poem most, and contrived to get a large literary party together, on pretence, as I said, of giving them a literary treat. I had got the poem transcribed, and gave it to Mr Ballantyne to read, who did it ample justice. Indeed, he read it with extraordinary effect ; so much so, that I was astonished at the poem myself, and before it was half done, all pronounced it Byron's. Every one was deceived, except Mr Ballantyne, who was not to be imposed on in that way ; but he kept the secret until we got to the Bridge, and then he told me his mind.

The Poetic Mirror was completely an off-hand production. I wrote it all in three weeks, except a very small proportion ; and in less than three months it was submitted to the public. The second poem in the volume, namely, the Epistle to R—— S——, the most beautiful and ingenious poem in the work, is not mine. It was written by Mr Thomas Pringle, who has now left

this country (a circumstance ever to be regretted), and was not meant as an imitation of Mr Scott's manner at all. There is likewise another small secret connected with that work, which I am not yet at liberty to unfold, but which the ingenious may perhaps discover. The first edition was sold in six weeks, and another of 750 copies has since been sold. I do not set a particular value on any poem in the work myself, except *THE GUDE GREYE KATTE*, which was written as a caricature of *The Pilgrims of the Sun*, *The Witch of Fife*, and some others of my fairy ballads. It is greatly superior to any of them. I have also been told, that in England, one of the imitations of Wordsworth's *Excursion* has been deemed excellent.

The year following, I published two volumes of *Tragedies*, to these I affixed the title of *DRAMATIC TALES, by the Author of The Poetic Mirror*. At that time, however, I forgot to mention, that *The Poetic Mirror* was published anonymously, and I was led to think, that, had the imitations of Wordsworth been less a caricature, the work might have passed, for a season at least, as the genuine productions of the authors themselves, whose names were prefixed to the several poems. I was strongly urged by some friends, previous to the publication of these plays, to try *Sir Anthony Moore* on the stage, and once, at the suggestion of Mr Walter Scott, I consented to submit it to the players, in and through Mr Ballantyne. But, by a trivial accident, the matter was delayed till I got

time to consider of it ; and then I shrunk from the idea of intrusting my character as a poet into the hands of every bungling and absurd actor, who, if even haply dissatisfied with his part, had the power of raising so much disapprobation, as might damn the whole piece. Consequently, my first attempts in the drama have never been offered for representation. Sir Anthony Moore is the least original, and the least poetical piece of the whole, and I trust it shall never be acted while I live ; but, if at any after period it should be brought forward, and one able performer appear in the character of Old Cecil, and another in that of Caroline, I might venture my credit and judgment, as an author, that it will prove successful. The pastoral drama of *All-Hallow Eve* was written at the suggestion of the Reverend Robert Morehead. *The Profligate Princes* is a modification of my first play, *The Hunting of Bad-lewe*, printed by Goldie ; and the fragment of *The Haunted Glen* was written off hand, to make the second volume of an equal extent with the first.

The small degree of interest that these dramas excited in the world, finished my dramatic and poetical career. I had put on the resolution of writing a drama every year as long as I lived, hoping to make myself perfect by degrees, as a man does in his calling, by serving an apprenticeship ; but the failure of those to excite notice fully convinced me, that either this was not the age to appreciate the qualities of dramatic composition, or that I was not possessed of the

talents fitting me for such an undertaking ; and so I gave up the ambitious design.

Before this period, all the poems that I had published had been begun and written by chance and at random, without any previous design. I had at that time commenced an epic poem on a regular plan, and I finished two books of it, pluming myself that it was to prove my greatest work. But, seeing that the poetical part of these dramas excited no interest in the public, I felt conscious that no poetry that I could ever be able to write would do so ; or, if it did, the success would hinge upon some casualty, on which it did not behove me to rely. So, from that day to this, save now and then an idle song to beguile a leisure hour, I have never written another line of poetry.

From the time I gave up " The Spy," I had been planning with my friends to commence the publication of a Magazine on a new plan ; but, for several years, we only conversed about the utility of such a work, without doing any thing farther. At length, among others, I chanced to mention it to Mr Thomas Pringle ; when I found that he and his friends had a plan in contemplation of the same kind. We agreed to join our efforts, and try to set it a-going ; but, as I declined the editorship on account of residing mostly on my farm at a distance from town, it became a puzzling question who was the best qualified among our friends for that undertaking. We at length fixed on Mr Gray as the fittest person for a principal de-

partment, and I went and mentioned the plan to Mr Blackwood, who, to my astonishment, I found had likewise long been cherishing a plan of the same kind. He said he knew nothing about Pringle, and always had his eye on me as a principal assistant; but he would not begin the undertaking, until he saw he could do it with effect. Finding him, however, disposed to encourage such a work, Pringle, at my suggestion, made out a plan in writing, with a list of his supporters, and sent it in a letter to me. I enclosed it in another, and sent it to Mr Blackwood; and not long after that period, Pringle and he came to an arrangement about commencing the work, while I was in the country. Thus I had the honour of being the beginner, and almost sole instigator of that celebrated work, BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE; but from the time I heard that Pringle had taken in Cleghorn as a partner, I declined all connexion with it, farther than as an occasional contributor. I told him the connexion would not likely last for a year, and insisted that he should break it at once; but to this proposal he would in nowise listen. As I had predicted, so it fell out, and much sooner than might have been expected. On the fourth month after the commencement of that work, I received a letter from Mr Blackwood, soliciting my return to Edinburgh; and when I arrived there, I found that he and his two redoubted editors had gone to loggerheads, and instead of arguing the matter face to face, they were correspond-

ing together at the rate of about a sheet an hour. Viewing this as a ridiculous mode of proceeding, I brought about two meetings between Mr Blackwood and Mr Pringle, and endeavoured all that I could to bring them to a right understanding about the matter. A reconciliation was effected at that time, and I returned again into the country. Soon after, however, I heard that the flames of controversy, and proud opposition, had broken out between the parties with greater fury than ever ; and, shortly after, that they had finally separated, and the two champions gone over and enlisted under the banners of Mr Constable, having left Mr Blackwood to shift for himself, and carried over, as they pretended, their right to the Magazine, with all their subscribers and contributors, to the other side.

I received letters from both parties. I loved Pringle, and would gladly have assisted him had it been in my power ; but, after balancing fairly the two sides, I thought Mr Blackwood more sinned against than sinning, and that the two editors had been endeavouring to bind him to a plan which could not possibly succeed ; so, on considering his disinterested friendship for me, manifested in several strong instances, I stuck to him, expecting excellent sport in the various exertions and manœuvres of the two parties for the superiority.

I know not what wicked genius put it into my head, but it was then, in an evil hour, when I had determined

on the side I was to espouse, that I wrote the Chaldee Manuscript, and transmitted it to Mr Blackwood from Yarrow. On first reading it, he never thought of publishing it; but some of the rascals to whom he showed it, after laughing at it, by their own accounts till they were sick, persuaded him, nay almost forced him, to insert it; for some of them went so far as to tell him, that if he did not admit that inimitable article, they would never speak to him again so long as they lived. Needless however is it now to deny, that they interlarded it with a good deal of deevilry of their own, which I had never thought of; and one who had a principal hand in these alterations has never yet been named as an aggressor.

I declare, I never once dreamed of giving any body offence by that droll article, nor did I ever think of keeping it a secret either from Mr Constable or Mr Pringle; so far from that, I am sure, had I been in town, I would have shown the manuscript to the latter before publication. I meant it as a sly history of the transaction, and the great literary battle that was to be fought. All that I expected was, a little retaliation of the same kind in the opposing magazine; and when I received letter after letter, informing me what a dreadful flame it had raised in Edinburgh, I could not be brought to believe that it was not a joke. I am not certain, but that I confessed the matter to Mr George Thomson, in the course of our correspondence, before I was aware of its importance. No one ever suspected me

as the author. When I came to town, every one made his remarks, and pronounced his anathemas upon it, without any reserve, in my hearing, which afforded me much amusement. Still I could not help viewing the whole as a farce, or something unreal and deceptive; and I am sure I never laughed so much in my life as at the rage in which I found so many people.

So little had I intended giving offence by what appeared in the Magazine, that I had written out a long continuation of the Manuscript, which I have by me to this day, in which I go over the painters, poets, lawyers, booksellers, magistrates, and ministers of Edinburgh, all in the same style; and with reference to the first part that was published, I might say of the latter as king Rehoboam said to the elders of Israel: "My little finger was thicker than my father's loins." It took all the energy of Mr Wilson and his friends, and some sharp remonstrances from Mr Walter Scott, as well as a great deal of controversy and battling with Mr Grieve, to prevent me from publishing the whole work as a large pamphlet, and putting my name to it.

That same year, I published the **BROWNIE OF BONS-
BECK**, and other Tales, in two volumes. I got injustice in the eyes of the world with regard to that tale, which was looked on as an imitation of the tale of Old Mortality, and a counter-part to that; whereas it was written long ere the tale of Old Mortality was heard of, and I well remember my chagrin on finding the

ground that I thought clear pre-occupied, before I could appear publicly on it, and that by such a redoubted champion. It was wholly owing to Mr Blackwood, that this tale was not published a year sooner, which would effectually have freed me from the stigma of being an imitator, and brought in the author of the Tales of My Landlord as an imitator of me. That was the only ill turn that ever Mr Blackwood did me; and it ought to be a warning to authors never to intrust booksellers with their manuscripts.

I mentioned to Mr Blackwood, that I had two tales I wished to publish, and at his request I gave him a reading of the manuscript. One of them was *The Brownie*, which, I believe, was not quite finished. He approved of it, but with *The Bridal of Polmood*, he would have nothing to do. Of course, my manuscripts were returned, and I had nothing else for it, but to retire to the country, and there begin and write two other tales in place of the one rejected. *The Bridal of Polmood*, however, was published from the same copy, and without the alteration of a word, and has been acknowledged by all who have read it, as the most finished, and best written tale, that ever I produced. Mr Blackwood, himself, must be sensible of this fact, and also, that in preventing its being published along with *The Brownie of Bodsbeck*, he did an injury both to himself and me. As a farther proof how little booksellers are to be trusted, he likewise wished to prevent the insertion of *The Wool-Gatherer*,

which has been an universal favourite ; but I know the source from whence it proceeded. I would never object trusting a bookseller, were he a man of any taste ; for, except he wishes to reject an author altogether, he can have no interest in asserting what he does not think. But the plague is, they *never read works themselves*, but give them to their minions, with whom there never fails to lurk a literary jealousy ; and whose suggestions may uniformly be regarded as any thing but the truth. For my own part, I know that I have always been looked on, by the learned part of the community, as an intruder in the paths of literature, and every opprobrium has been thrown on me from that quarter. The truth is, that I am so. The walks of learning are occupied by a powerful aristocracy, who deem that province their own peculiar right, else, what would avail all their dear bought collegiate honours and degrees. No wonder that they should view an intruder, from the humble and despised ranks of the community, with a jealous and indignant eye, and impede his progress by every means in their power.

I was unlucky in the publication of my first novel, and what impeded me still farther, was the publication of *Old Mortality* ; for, having made the redoubted Burly the hero of my tale, I was obliged to go over it again, and alter all the traits in the character of the principal personage, substituting John Brown of Caldwell for John Balfour of Burly, greatly to the de-

triment of my story. I tried also to take out clavers, but I found this impossible. A better instance could not be given of the good luck attached to one person, and the bad luck which attended the efforts of another.

I observed, that in the extended MS., I had detailed all the proceedings of a club, the most ridiculous perhaps that ever was established in any city, and, owing to some particular circumstances, I cannot refrain from mentioning them here. This club was established one night, in a frolic, at a jovial dinner party, in the house of a young lawyer, now of some celebrity at the bar, and was christened *the Right and Wrong Club*. The chief principle of the club was, that whatever any of its members should assert, the whole were bound to support the same, whether *right or wrong*. We were so delighted with the novelty of the idea, that we agreed to meet next day at Oman's Hotel, and celebrate its anniversary. We were dull and heavy when we met, but did not part so. We dined at five, and separated at two in the morning, before which time, the club had risen greatly in our estimation; so we agreed to meet next day, and every successive day for five or six weeks, and during all that time our hours of sitting continued the same. No constitutions on earth could stand this. Had our meetings been restricted to once a month, or even once a week, the club might have continued to this day, and would have been a source of much pleasure and entertainment to the members; but to meet daily was out of the question.

The result was, that several of the members got quite deranged, and I drank myself into an inflammatory fever. The madness of the members proved no bar to the hilarity of the society; on the contrary, it seemed to add a great deal of zest to it as a thing quite in character. An inflammatory fever, however, sounded rather strange in the ears of the joyous group, and threw a damp on their spirits. They continued their meetings for some days longer, and regularly sent a deputation at five o'clock to inquire after my health, and I was sometimes favoured with a call from one or more of the members, between two and three in the morning, when they separated. The mornings after such visits, I was almost sure to have to provide new knockers and bell handles for all the people on the stair. Finding, however, that I still grew worse, they had the generosity to discontinue their sittings, and to declare, that they would not meet again, until their poet was able to join them, and if that should never happen, they would never meet again. This motion (which was made by a newly-initiated member, Mr John Ballantyne,) was hailed with plaudits of approbation, and from that hour to this *the Right and Wrong Club* never again met. It was high time that it should have been given up, for one term at least. It proved a dear club to me. I was three weeks confined to bed, and if it had not been Dr Saunders, I believe I would have died. Its effects turned out better with several of the other members, as

it produced a number of happy marriages. During the period of high excitement, the lady wrote flaming love-letters to young ladies of their acquaintances, containing certain proffers, which, with returning reflection, they found they could not with propriety retract. It made some of them do the wisest acts that ever they did in their lives.

This brings me to an anecdote which I must relate, though with little credit to myself; one that I never reflect on but with feelings of respect, admiration, and gratitude. I formerly mentioned, that I had quarrelled with Mr Walter Scott. It is true, I had all the quarrel on my own side; no matter for that, I was highly offended, exceedingly angry, and shunned all communication with him for a twelvemonth. He heard that I was ill, and that my trouble had assumed a dangerous aspect. Every day, on his return from the Parliament-House, he called at Messrs Grieve & Scott's to inquire after my health, with much friendly solicitude. And this too, after I had renounced his friendship, and told him that I held both it and his literary talents in contempt. One day in particular, he took Mr Grieve aside, and asked him if I had proper attendants and an able physician; Mr Grieve assured him that I was carefully attended to, and had the skill of a professional gentleman, in whom I had the most implicit confidence. "I would fain have called," said he, "but I knew not how I would be received; I request, however, that he may have ev-

ery proper attendance; and want for nothing that can contribute to the restoration of his health. And in particular, I have to request that you will let no pecuniary consideration whatever, prevent his having the best medical advice in Edinburgh, for I shall see it paid. Poor Hogg, I would not for all that I am worth in the world, that any thing serious should befall him.'

As Mr Grieve had been enjoined, he never mentioned this circumstance to me; I accidentally, however, came to the knowledge of it some months afterwards; I then questioned him as to the truth of it, when he told me it all, very much affected. I went straight home, and wrote an apology to Mr Scott, which was heartily received, and he invited me to breakfast next morning, adding, that he was longing much to see me. The same day, as we were walking round St Andrew Square, I endeavoured to make the cause of our difference the subject of conversation, but he eluded it. I tried it again some days afterwards, sitting in his study, but he again parried it with equal dexterity; so that I have been left to conjecture what could be his motive in refusing so peremptorily the trifle that I had asked of him. I know him too well to have the least suspicion that there could be any selfish or unfriendly feeling in the determination that he adopted, and I can account for it in no other way, than by supposing, that he thought it mean in me to attempt either to acquire gain, or a name, by the efforts of other men; and that it was much more hon-

ourable, to use a proverb of his own, "that every herring should hang by its own head."

Mr Wilson once drove me also into an ungovernable rage, by turning a long and elaborate poem, of mine, on *The Field of Waterloo*, into ridicule, on which I sent him a letter, which I thought was a tickler. There was scarcely an abusive epithet in our language, that I did not call him by. My letter, however, had not the designed effect: the opprobrious names proved only a source of amusement to Wilson, and he sent me a letter of explanation and apology, which knit my heart closer to him than ever. My friends in general, have been of opinion, that he has amused himself and the public too often at my expense; but, except in one instance, which terminated very ill for me, and in which I had no more concern than the man in the moon, I never discerned any evil design on his part, and thought it all excellent sport. At the same time, I must acknowledge, that it was using too much freedom with any author, to print his name in full, to poems, letters, and essays, which he himself never saw. I do not say that he has done this, but either he or some one else has done it many a time.

My next literary undertaking, was the *Jacobite Relics of Scotland*, the first volume of which I published in 1819, reserving the second volume until the present year, in the hope of collecting every remnant that was worthy of preservation. The task has been exceedingly troublesome, but far from being unmixed

with pleasure. In the interim between the publication of the first and second volumes I collected and arranged *THE WINTER EVENING TALES* for publication, which were published by Oliver & Boyd last year, in two volumes, closely printed. The greater part of these Tales were written in early life, when I was serving as a shepherd lad among the mountains, and on looking them over, I saw well enough that there was a blunt rusticity about them ; but I liked them the better for it, and altered nothing. To me they appeared not only more characteristic of the life that I then led, but also of the manners that I was describing. As to the indelicacies hinted at by some reviewers, I do declare such a thought never entered into my mind, so that the public are indebted for these indelicacies to the acuteness of the discoverers. Wo be to that reader who goes over a simple and interesting tale fishing for indelicacies; without calculating on what is natural for the characters with whom he is conversing, a practice, however, too common among people of the present age, especially if the author be not a blue-stocking. All that I can say for myself in general is, that I am certain I never intentionally meant ill, and that I hope to be forgiven, both by God and man, for every line that I have written injurious to the cause of religion, of virtue, or of good manners. On the other hand, I am so ignorant of the world, that it can scarcely be expected I should steer clear of all inadvertencies.

The following list of works may appear trifling in

the eyes of some, but when it is considered that they have been produced by a man almost devoid of education, and in a great degree, in his early days, debarred from every advantage in life, and possessed only of a quick eye in observing the operations of nature, it is certainly a sufficient excuse for inserting them here, more especially as some of them run a great risk of being lost. I am proud of it myself, and I do not deny it, nor is there one in the list, for the contents of which I have any reason to blush, when all things are taken to account. I was forty years of age before I began to write the *Queen's Wake*. That poem was published in 1813; so that in the last seven years, I have written and published

| | Vols. |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| The Queen's Wake..... | 1 |
| Pilgrims of The Sun..... | 1 |
| Hunting of Badlews..... | 1 |
| Mador of the Moor..... | 1 |
| Poetic Mirror..... | 1 |
| Dramatic Tales..... | 2 |
| Brownie of Bodsbeck..... | 2 |
| Winter Evening Tales..... | 2 |
| Sacred Melodies..... | 1 |
| Border Garland, No I..... | 1 |
| Jacobite Relics of Scotland | 2 |

Making fifteen volumes in seven years, besides many articles in periodical works. Previous to that period,

I had produced the following work, which I meant to have been chiefly ballads and tales, but which I was obliged to eke out with such things as I had. Most of the miscellaneous matter is now, however, cancelled, and two or three ballads added in their place, to make the work somewhat uniform. *THE SPY*, in one volume quarto. *THE FOREST MINSTREL*. *HOGG ON SHEEP*, and another not able work, published about the end of the last century, entitled *PASTORALS, POEMS, &c. by James Hogg, a tenant in Ettrick*, mentioned in the former part of this memoir, making, with the preceding list, twenty volumes in all.

I omitted to mention formerly, that in 1815, I was applied to by a celebrated composer of music, in the name of a certain company in London, to supply verses, suiting some ancient Hebrew Melodies, selected in the synagogues of Germany. I proffered to finish them at a guinea a stanza, which was agreed to at once, and I furnished verses to them all. The work was published in a splendid style, price one guinea, but it was a hoax upon me, for I was never paid a farthing. The *Border Garland* consists of nine songs, with the symphonies and accompaniments; to these I intend adding a number occasionally, if I can hit upon songs and airs that please me, so as to make by degrees a creditable work.

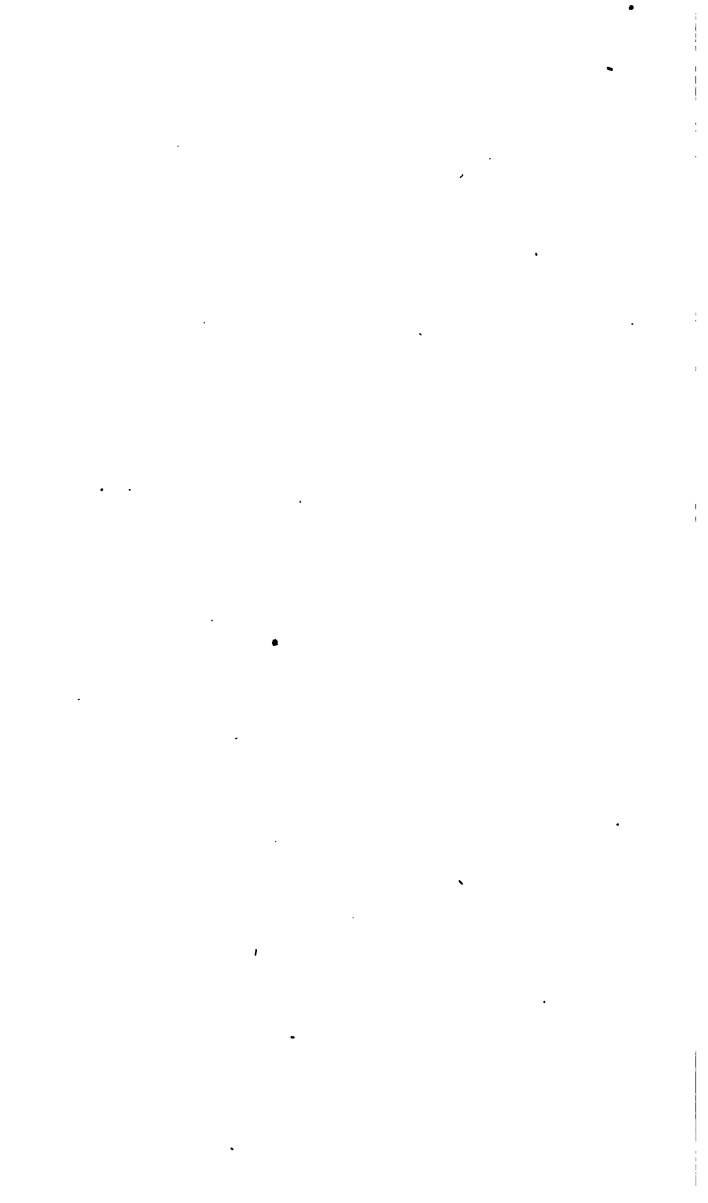
In this short memoir, which is composed of extracts from a larger detail, I have confined myself to such anecdotes only, as relate to my progress as a writer,

and these I intend continuing from year to year as long as I live. There is much that I have written that cannot as yet appear ; for the literary men of Scotland, my contemporaries, may change their characters, so as to disgrace the estimate at which I have set them, and my social companions may alter their habits. Of my own productions, I have endeavoured to give an opinion, with perfect candour ; and, although the partiality of an author may be too apparent in the preceding pages, yet I trust every generous heart will excuse the failing, and make due allowance.



THE

MOUNTAIN BARD.



SIR DAVID GRAEME.

A



SIR DAVID GRAEME.

ANY person who has read the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* with attention, must have observed what a singular degree of interest and feeling the simple ballad of "The twa Corbies" impresses upon the mind, which is rather increased than diminished by the unfinished state in which the story is left. It appears as if the bard had found his powers of description inadequate to a detail of the circumstances attending the fatal catastrophe, without suffering the interest already roused to subside, and had artfully consigned it over to the fancy of every reader to paint it what way he chose ; or else that he lamented the untimely fate of a knight, whose base treatment he durst not otherwise make known than in that short parabolical dialogue. That the original is not improved in the following ballad, will too manifestly appear upon perusal ; I think it, however, but just to acknowledge, that the idea was suggested to me by reading "The twa Corbies."

THE dow flew east, the dow flew west,

The dow flew far ayont the fell ;

An' sair at e'en she seemed distrest,

But what perplex'd her could not tell

But aye she coo'd wi' mournfu' croon,

An' ruffled a' her feathers fair ;

An' lookit sad as she war boun'

To leave the land for evermair.

The lady wept, an some did blame,

She didnae blame the bonnie dow,

But sair she blamed Sir David Graeme,

Because the knight had broke his vow.

For he had sworn by the starns sae bright,

An' by their bed on the dewy green,

To meet her there on St Lambert's night,

Whatever dangers lay between.

To risk his fortune an' his life

In bearing her frae her father's towers,

To gie her a' the lands o' Dryfe,

An' the Enzie-holm wi' its bonnie bowers.

The day arrived, the evening came,
The lady looked wi' wistful ee ;
But, O, alas ! her noble Graeme
Frae e'en to morn she didna see.

An' she has sat her down an' grat ;
The warld to her like a desert seemed ;
An' she wyted this, an' she wyted that,
But o' the real cause never dreamed.

The sun had drunk frae Keilder fell,
His beverage o' the morning dew ;
The deer had crouched her in the dell,
The heather oped its bells o' blue ;

The lambs were skipping on the braise,
The laverock hiche attour them sung,
An' aye she hailed the jocund day,
Till the wee, wee tabors o' heaven rung.

The lady to her window hied,

An' it opened owre the banks o' Tyne,

"An', O, alak!" she said, an' sighed,

"Sure ilka breast is blyth but mine!

Where hae ye been, my bonnie dow,

That I hae fed wi' the bread an' wine?

As roving a' the country through,

O, saw ye this fause knight o' mine?"

The dow sat down on the window tree,

An' she carried a lock o' yellow hair;

Then she perched upon that lady's knee,

An' carefully she placed it there.

"What can this mean? This lock's the same

That aince was mine. Whate'er betide,

This lock I gae to Sir David Graeme,

The flower of a' the Border side.

“ He might hae sent it by squire or page,
An’ no letten the wily dow steal’t awa ;
’Tis a matter for the lore and the counsels of age,
But the thing I canna read ata’.”

The dow flew east, the dow flew west,
The dow she flew far ayont the fell,
An’ back she came, wi’ panting breast,
Ere the ringing o’ the castle bell.

She lighted ahiche on the holly-tap,
An she cried, “ cur-dow,” an’ fluttered her wing ;
Then flew into that lady’s lap,
An’ there she placed a diamond ring.

“ What can this mean ? This ring is the same
That aince was mine. Whate’er betide,
This ring I gae to Sir David Graeme,
The flower of a’ the Border side.

“ He sends me back the love tokens true !
Was ever poor maiden perplexed like me ?
’Twould seem he’s reclaimed his faith an’ his vow,
But all is fauldit in mystery.”

An’ she has sat her down an’ grat,
The world to her a desert seemed ;
An’ she wyted this, an’ she wyted that,
But o’ the real cause never dreamed.

When, lo ! Sir David’s trusty hound,
Wi’ humpling back, an’ a waefu’ ee,
Came cringing in an’ lookit around,
But his look was hopeless as could be.

He laid his head on that lady’s knee,
An’ he lookit as somebody he would name,
An’ there was a language in his howe e’e,
That was stronger than a tongue could frame.

She fed him wi' the milk an' the bread,
An' ilka good thing that he wad hae ;
He lickit her hand, he coured his head,
Then slowly, slowly he slunkered away.

But she has eyed her fause knight's hound,
An' a' to see where he wad gae :
He whined, an' he howled, an' lookit around,
Then slowly, slowly he trudged away.

Then she's casten aff her coal-black shoon,
An' her bonnie silken-hose, sae glancin' an' sheen,
She kiltit her wilye coat an' broidered gown,
An' away she has linkit over the green.

She followed the hound owre muirs an' rocks,
Through mony a dell an' dowie glen,
Till frae her brow an' bonnie goud locks,
The dew dreepit down like the drops o' rain.

An' ay she said, " My love may be hid,
An' darena come to the castle to me ;
But him I will find and dearly I'll chide,
For lack o' stout heart an' courtesye.

" But æ kind press to his manly breast,
An' æ kind kiss in the moorland glen,
Will weel atone for a' that is past.
O wae to the paukie snares o' men !"

An' aye she eyed the gray sloth-hound,
As he windit owre Deadwater fell,
Till he came to the den wi' the moss inbound,
An' O, but it kythed a lonesome dell !

An' he waggit his tail, an' he fawned about,
Then he coured him down sae wearilye ;
" Ah ! yon's my love, I hae found him out,
He's lying waiting in the dell for me.

“ To meet a knight near the fall of night
Alone in this untrodden wild,
It scarcely becomes a lady bright,
But I’ll vow that the hound my steps beguiled.”

Alak ! whatever a maiden may say,
True has’t been said, an’ aften been sung,
The e’e her heart’s love will betray,
An’ the secret will sirple frae her tongue.

“ What ails my love, that he looks nae roun’,
A lady’s stately step to view ;
Ah me ! I hae neither stockings nor shoon,
An’ my feet are sae white wi’ the moorland dew !

“ Sae sound as he sleeps in his hunting gear,
To waken him great pity would be ;
Deaf is the man that caresna to hear,
An’ blind is he wha wantana to see.”

Sae softly she treads the wee green swaird,
Wi' the lichens an' the ling a' fringed around.
“ My e'en are darkened wi' some wul-weird,
What ails my love, he sleeps sae sound.”

She gae ae look, she needit but ane,
For it left nae sweet uncertaintye ;
She saw a wound through his shoulder bane,
An' in his brave breast two or three.

There wasna sic e'en on the Border green,
As the piercing e'en o' Sir David Graeme ;
She gliaked wi' her e'e where these e'en should be,
But the raven had been there afore she came.

There's a cloud that fa's darker than the night,
An' darkly on that lady it came ;
'There's a sleep as deep as the sleep outright,—
'Tis without a feeling or a name.

'Tis a dull an' a dreamless lethargye,
For the spirit strays owre vale an' hill,
An' the bosom is left a vacancy,
An' when it comes back it is darker still.

O shepherd, lift that comely corpse,
Well may you see no wound is there,
There's a faint rose mid the bright dew drops,
An' they have not wet her glossy hair.

There's a lady has lived in Howswood tower,
'Tis seven years past on St Lambert's day,
An' aye when comes the vesper hour
These words an' no more can she say.

" They slew my love on the wild Swaird green,
As he was on his way to me,
An' the ravens picked his bonnie blue e'en,
An' the tongue that was formed for courtesye.

“ My brothers they slew my comely knight,
An’ his grave is red blood to the brim
I thought to have slept out the lang, lang night,
But they’ve wakened me, an’ wakened not him !”

NOTES

TO

SIR DAVID GRAEME.

The dow flew east, the dow flew west.—v. 1.

I borrowed the above line from a beautiful old rhyme which I have often heard my mother repeat, but of which she knew no tradition ; and from this introduction the part of the dove naturally arose. The rhyme runs thus :

“ The heron flew east, the heron flew west,
The heron flew to the fair forest,
For there she saw a lovely bower,
Was a’ clad o’er wi’ lily-flower,
And in the bower there was a bed,
Wi’ silken sheets, an’ weel down spread,
And in the bed there lay a knight,
Whose wounds did bleed both day and night ;
And by the bed there stood a stane,
And there was set a leal maiden,
With silver needle and silken thread,
Stemming the wounds when they did bleed.—

To gie her a' the lands o' Dryfe.—v. 5.

The river Dryfe forms the south east district of Annandale ; on its banks the ruins of the tower of Græme still remain in considerable uniformity.

The sun had drunk frae Keilder fell,

His beverage of the morning dew.—v. 8.

Keilder fells are those hills which lie eastward of the sources of North Tyne.

When, lo ! Sir David's trusty hound,

Wi' humpling back an' a wae fu' ee.—v. 20.

It is not long ago since a shepherd's dog watched his corpse on the snow among the mountains of this country, until nearly famished, and at last led to the discovery of the body of his disfigured master.

THE PEDLAR.



THE PEDLAR.

THIS ballad is founded on a fact, which has been magnified by popular credulity and superstition into the terrible story which follows. It is here related, according to the *best informed* old people about Ettrick, as nearly as is consistent with the method pursued in telling it. I need not inform the reader, that every part of it is believed by them to be absolute truth.

'Twas late, late, late on a Saturday's night,
The moon was set, an' the wind was lown ;
The lazy mist crap down frae the height,
An' the dim blue lowe glimmered laigh on the downe.

O'er the rank scented fen the bleeter was warping,
High on the black muir the foxes did howl,
All by the lone hearth the cricket sat harping,
An' far on the air came the notes o' the owl.

The lin it was rowting adown frae the height,
An' the water was soughin, sae goustilye:—
O it was sic an eeriesome Saturday night,
As ane in a lifetime hardly wad see.

When the lady o' Thirlestane rose in her sleep,
An' she shrieked sae loud that her maid ran to see;
Her een they were set, an' her voice it was deep,
An' she shook like the leaf o' the aspin tree.

“ O where is the pedlar I drave frae the ha',
That pled sae sair to tarry wi' me ?”
“ He's gane to the mill, for the miller sells ale,
An' the pedlar's as weel as a man can be.”

‘ I wish he had staid, he sae earnestly prayed,
An' he hight a braw pearling in present to gie ;
But I was sae hard, that I could na regard,
Tho' I saw the saut tear trickle fast frae his ee.

“ But O what a terrible vision I’ve seen,
The pedlar a’ mangled—most shocking to see !
An’ he gapit, an’ waggit, an’ stared wi’ his een,
An’ he seemed to lay a’ the blame upo’ me !

“ I fear that in life he will ne’er mair be seen,
An’ the very suspicion o’t terrifies me :
I wadna hae siccan a vision again,
For a’ the gude kye upon Thirlestane lee.

“ Yet wha wad hae heart the poor pedlar to kill ?
O Grizzy, my girl, will ye gang an’ see ?
If the pedlar is safe, an’ alive at the mill,
A merk o’ gude money I’ll gie unto thee.”

“ O lady, ’tis dark, an’ I heard the dead bell ;
An’ I darena gae yonder for goud nor fee :
But the miller has lodgings might serve yoursel,
An’ the pedlar’s as weel as a pedlar can be.

She sat till day, an' she sent wi' fear,—

The miller said there he never had been ;

She went to the kirk, an' speered for him there,

But the pedlar in life was never mair seen.

Frae aisle to aisle she lookit wi' care ;

Frae pew to pew she hurried her een,

An' a' to see if the pedlar was there,

But the pedlar in life was never mair seen.

But late, late, late, on a Saturday's night,

As the laird was walking along the lee,

A silly auld pedlar came by on his right,

An' a muckle green pack on his shoulders had he.

“ O where are ye gaun, ye beggarly loun ?

Ye's nouthar get lodging nor sale frae me.”

He turned him about, an' the blude it ran down,

An' his throat was a' hacked, an' ghastly was he.

Then straight wi' a sound he sank i' the ground,
An' a fire-flaught out o' the place did flee,
To try a bit prayer the laird clappet down,
As flat an' as feared as a body could be.

He fainted :—but soon as he gathered his breath,
He tauld what a terrible sight he had seen :
The devil a' woundit, an' bleedin' to death,
In shape o' a pedlar upo' the mill green.

The lady she shriekit, the door it was steekit,
The servants were glad that the devil was gane,
But ilk Saturday's night, when faded the light,
Near the mill-house the poor bleeding pedlar was seen.

An' aye when passengers by were gaun,
A doolfu' voice came frae the mill-ee,
At the turn o' the night when the clock struck one,
Cryin', " O Rob Riddle, hae mercy on me !"

The place was harassed, the mill was laid waste,
The miller he fled to a far countrie ;
But aye at e'en the pedlar was seen,
An' at midnight the voice came frae the mill-ee.

The lady frae hame wad never mair budge,
From the time that the sun gade over the hill ;
An' now she had a' the puir bodies to lodge,
As nane durst gae on for the ghost o' the mill.

But the minister there was a body o' skill,
Nae feared for devil or spirit was he ;
An' he's gane awa to watch at the mill,
To see if this turbulent ghaist he could see.

He prayed an' he read, an' he sent them to bed,
An' the Bible anunder his arm took he,
An' round an' round the mill-house he gade,
To try if this terrible sight he could see.

Wi' a shivering groan the pedlar came on,
An' the muckle green pack on his shoulders had he;
But he nouth had flesh, blude, nor bone,
For the moon shone through his thin bodye.

The ducks they whackit, the dogs they yowled,
The herons they skraiched maist piteouslie;
An' the horses they snorkit for miles around,
While the priest an' the pedlar together might be.

The minister opened the haly book,
An' charged him by a' the Sacred Three,
To tell why that ghastly figure he took,
To terrify a' the hale countrye.

The pedlar he opened his fleshless gums,
An' siccan a voice ne'er strack the ear,
It was like the stound an' whistling sound
Of the crannied wind at midnight drear.

“ O weel,” he said, “ may I rise frae the dead,
Guilt presses the hardest nearest hame ;
An’ here ’tis sae new that ye a’ may rue,
An’ yon proud lady was a’ the blame.

“ My body was butchered within that mill,
My banes lie under the inner mill-wheel,
An’ here my spirit maun wander, until
Some crimes an’ villanies I can reveal :

“ I robbed my niece of three hundred pounds,
Which Providence suffered me not to enjoy ;
For the sake of that money I gat my death’s wounds ;
The miller me kend, but he missed his ploy.

“ The money lies buried on Balderstone hill,
Beneath the mid bourack o’ three times three.
O gie’t to the owners, kind sir, an’ it will
Bring wonderfu’ comfort an’ rest unto me.

'Tis drawing to day, nae mair I can say,
My message I trust, good father, with thee ;
If the black cock should crawl, when I am awa,
O weary, an' weary ! what wad come o' me ?"

Wi' a sound like a horn away he was borne ;
The grass was a' fired where the spirit had been ;
An' certain it is, from that day to this,
The ghost o' the pedlar was never mair seen.

The mill was repaired, an' low i' the yird,
The banes lay under the inner mill-wheel ;
The box an' the ellwand beside him war hid,
An' mony a thimble an' mony a seal.

Must the scene of iniquity cursed remain ?
Can this bear the stamp of the heavenly seal ?
Yet certain it is, from that day to this,
The millers o' Thirlestane ne'er hae done weel.

But there was an auld mason wha wrought at the mill,
In the rules o' Providence skilfu' was he ;
He keepit a bane o' the pedlar's heel,
An' a queerer wee bane you never did see.

The miller had fled to the forest o' Jed ;
But time had now grizzled his haffets wi' snaw ;
He was crookit an' auld, an' his head was turned bald,
Yet his joke he could brik wi' the best o' them a'.

Away to the Border the mason he ran,
To try wi' the bane if the miller was fey ;
And into a smiddie wi' mony a man,
He fand him a gaffin fu' gaily that day.

The mason he crackit, the mason he taukit,
Of a' curiosities mighty an' mean ;
Then pu'd out the bane, an' declared there was nane
Who in Britain had ever the equal o't seen.

Then ilka ane took it, an' ilka ane lookit,
An' ilka ane ca'd it a comical bane ;
To the miller it goes, wha, wi' specks on his nose,
To hae an' to view it was wondrous fain.

But what was his horror, as leaning he stood,
An' what the surprise o' his cronies around,
When the little wee bane fell a streamin wi' blood,
Which dyed a' his fingers, an' ran to the ground !

They charged him wi' murder, an' a' the hale crew
Cried the truth should be told should they bringit frae hell,
A red goad o' airn frae the fire they drew,
An' they swore they wad spit him unless he wad tell.

" O hald," said the mason, " for how can this be !
You'll find you're all out when the truth I reveal ;
At fair Thirlestane I gat this wee bane,
Deep buried anunder the inner mill-wheel."

“ O God !” said the wretch, wi’ the tear in his ee,
“ O pity a creature lang doomed to despair ;
A silly auld pedlar, wha begged of me
For mercy, I murdered, and buried him there !”

To Jeddart they hauled the auld miller wi’ speed,
An’ they hangit him dead on a high gallows-tree ;
An’ *afterwards* they in full counsel agreed,
That Rob Riddle he richly deserved to dee.

The thief may escape the lash an’ the rape,
The liar an’ swearer their vile hides may save,
The wrecker of unity pass with impunity,
But whan gat the murd’rer in peace to his grave ?

Ca’t not superstition, if reason you find it,
Nor laugh at a story attestit sae weel ;
For lang will the *facts* i’ the Forest be mindit,
O’ the ghaist an’ the bane o’ the pedlar’s heel.

NOTES

TO

THE PEDLAR.

When the lady o' Thirlestane rose in her sleep.—v. 3.

The lady here alluded to was the second wife of Sir Robert Scott, the last knight of Thirlestane, of whom the reader shall hear further. Thirlestane is situated high on the Ettrick, and was the baronial castle of the Scotts of Thirlestane. It is now the property of the Right Honourable Lord Napier, who wears the arms of that ancient house. The mill is still on the old site.

O lady, 'tis dark, an' I heard the dead-bell!

An' I darena gae yonder for goud nor fee.—v. 10.

By the dead-bell is meant a tinkling in the ears, which our peasantry in the country regard as a secret intelligence of some friend's decease. Thus this natural occurrence strikes many with a superstitious awe. This reminds me of a trifling anecdote, which I will here relate as an instance. Our two servant-

girls agreed to go an errand of their own, one night after supper, to a considerable distance, from which I strove to persuade them, but could not prevail. So, after going to the apartment where I slept, I took a drinking-glass, and, coming close to the back of the door, made two or three sweeps round the lips of the glass with my finger, which caused a loud shrill sound. I then overheard the following dialogue.—*B.* “ Ah, mercy ! the dead-bell went through my head just now with such a knell as I never heard.” *J.* “ I heard it too.” *B.* “ Did you indeed ? That is remarkable. I never knew of two hearing it at the same time before.” *J.* “ We will not go to Midgehope to-night.” *B.* “ I would not go for all the world. I shall warrant it is my poor brother Wat : who knows what these wild Irishes may have done to him ?”

Amongst people less conversant in the manners of the cottage than I have been, it may reasonably be suspected that I am prone to magnify these vulgar superstitions, in order to give countenance to several of them hinted at in the ballads. Therefore, as this book is designed solely for amusement, I hope I shall be excused for here detailing a few more of them, which still linger amongst the wilds of the country to this day, and which I have been an eye-witness to a thousand times ; and from these the reader may judge what they must have been in the times to which these ballads refer.

In addition to the dead-bell.—If one of the ears is at any time seized with a glowing heat, which may very easily happen, if exposed to a good fire or a strong wind, they straight conclude that some person is talking of them. They then turn to such as are near them, and put the following question :

“ *Right lug, left lug, whilk lug glows ?*” That person immediately guesseth ; and if the one that glows is hit upon, they say, “ You love me better than they who talk of me ;” and so conclude they are all ill spoken of. But if the guesser hits upon the wrong *lug*, they say, “ You love me worse than they who talk of me ;” and rest satisfied that some person is saying good of them. When the nostrils itch, they are sure to hear tell of some person being dead ; and the *death-watch*, the *death-tap*, and the *death-swap*, which last is a loud sharp stroke, are still current ; whilst the belief in wraiths, ghaists, and bogles, is little or nothing abated.

When they sneeze on first stepping out of bed in the morning, they are thence certified that strangers will be there in the course of the day, in number corresponding to the times they sneeze ; and if a feather, a straw, or any such thing, be observed hanging at a dog’s nose or beard, they call that a *guest*, and are sure of the approach of a stranger. If it hang long at the dog’s nose, the visitant is to stay long ; but if it fall instantly away, the person is to stay a short time. They judge also, from the length of this *guest*, what will be the size of the real one, and from its shape, whether it will be a man or a woman : and they watch carefully on what part of the floor it drops, as it is on that very spot the stranger will sit. And there is scarcely a shepherd in the whole country, who, if he chances to find one of his flock dead on a Sabbath, is not thence assured that he will have two or three more in the course of the week. During the season that ewes are milked, the bught door is always carefully shut at even ; and the reason they assign for this is, that when it is negligently left open,

the witches and fairies never miss the opportunity of dancing in it all night. Nothing in the world can be more ridiculous than this supposition; for the bught is commonly so foul, that they are obliged to wade to the ancles in mud, consequently the witches could not find a more inconvenient spot for dancing on the whole farm. Many, however, still adhere to that custom; and I was once present when an old shoe was found in the bught that none of them would claim, and they gravely and rationally concluded that one of the witches had lost it while dancing in the night. When any of them eat an egg, as soon as they have emptied it of its contents, they always crush the shell. An English gentleman asked Mr William Laidlaw why the Scots did that. He, being well acquainted with the old adage, replied, "That it was for fear the witches got them to sail over to Flanders in." "What though they should?" said he: "Are you so much afraid that the witches should leave you?"

Whether it proceeds from a certain habit of body in the cattle, from their food, or what is the fundamental cause of it, I cannot tell; but the milk of whole herds of cows is liable at times to a strange infection, whereby it is converted into a tough jelly as soon as it cools from the udder, and is thus rendered loathsome and unfit for use; this being a great loss and grievance to the owner. It will scarcely be believed that there are very many of the families in Ettrick and its vicinity, and some most respectable ones, who have, at some period in the present age, been driven to use very gross incantations for the removal of this from their cattle, which they believe to proceed from witchcraft. The effects of these are so apparent on

the milk in future, and so well attested, that the circumstance is of itself sufficient to stagger the resolution of the most obstinate misbeliever in witchcraft, if not finally to convert him. I am not so thoroughly initiated into this mystery as to describe it minutely ; but, in the first place, a fire is set on, and surrounded with green turfs, in which a great number of pins are stuck. A certain portion of the milk of each cow, so infected, is then hung on in a pot, with a horse's shoe, and a black dish, with its mouth downward, placed in it. The doors are then carefully shut, and the milk continues to boil ; and the first person who comes to that house afterwards is always blamed for the mischief. But the poor old women are generally suspected. There are, besides, a number of other *fracts*, too tedious and too common to be minutely described here : such as spilling salt on the ground, or milk in the fire ; suffering the dishwater to boil, without putting a peat in it ; shavings at candles ; thirteen in a company, &c. : all which are ominous, or productive of their particular effects.

Many are apt to despise their poor illiterate countrymen for these weak and superstitious notions ; but I am still of opinion, that, in the circumstance of their attaching credit to them, there is as much to praise as to blame. Let it be considered, that their means of information have not been adequate to the removal of these ; while, on the other hand, they have been used to hear them related, and attested as truths, by the very persons whom they were bound by all the laws of nature and gratitude to reverence and believe.

*An' aye when passengers by were gaun,
 A doolfu' voice came frae the mill-e'e,
 On Saturday's night, when the clock struck one,
 Cryin', "O Rob Riddle, hae mercy on me!"—v. 18.*

In addition to this cry of despair, which was sometimes heard from the mill, it was common for the ghost to go down to the side of the mill-dam at a certain hour of the night, calling out, "Ho, Rob Riddle, come home to your supper; your sowens are cold!" To account for this, tradition adds, that the miller confessed at his death, that the pedlar came down to the mill to inform him that it was wearing late, and that he must come home to his supper; and that he took that opportunity to murder him. At other times it was heard crying in a lamentable voice, "O saw ye ought of John Waters? Nobody has seen John Waters!" This, it seems, was the pedlar's name.

The place was harassed, the mill was laid waste.—v. 19.

To such a height did the horror of this apparition arrive in Ettrick, that it is certain there are few in the parish who durst go to or by the mill after sunset: but, unlike many of the country bogles, which assume a variety of fantastical shapes, this never appeared otherwise than in the shape of a pedlar with a green pack on his back; and so simple and natural was his whole deportment, that few ever suspected him for the spirit, until he vanished away. He once came so near two men in the twilight, that they familiarly offered him snuff; when he instantly sunk into the earth, and left his companions in a state of insensibility.

*But the minister there was a body o' skill,
Nae feared for devil or spirit was he.—v. 21.*

The great and worthy Mr Boston was the person who is said to have laid this ghost; and the people of Ettrick are much disappointed at finding no mention made of it in his memoirs: but some, yet alive, have heard John Corry, who was his servant, tell the following story.—One Saturday afternoon Mr Boston came to him and said, “John, you must rise early on Monday, and get a kilnful of oats dried before day.” —“You know very well, master,” said John, “that I dare not for my breath go to the mill before day.” —“John,” said he, “I tell you to go, and I will answer for it, that nothing shall molest you.” John, who revered his master, went away, determined to obey; “but that very night,” said John, “he went to the mill, prayed with the family, and staid very late, but charged them not to mention it.” On Monday morning John arose at two o'clock, took a horse, and went to the mill, which is scarcely a mile below the kirk; and about a bowshot west of the mill, Mr Boston came running by him, buttoned in his great coat, but was so wrapt in thought, that he neither perceived his servant nor his horse. When he came home at even, Mr Boston said to him, “Well, John, have you seen the pedlar?” “No, no, sir,” said John, “there was nothing troubled me; but I saw that you were yonder before me this morning.” “I did not know that you saw me,” said he, “nor did I wish to be seen, John; therefore say nothing of it.” This was in March, and in May following the mill was repaired, when the remains of the pedlar and his pack were actually found, and the hearts of the poor people set at ease:

for it is a received opinion, that if the body, or bones, or any part, of a murdered person are found, the ghost is then at rest, and that it leaves mankind to find out the rest. I shall only mention another instance of this. There is a place below Yarrow Kirk called Bell's Lakes, which was for a great number of years the terror of the whole neighbourhood, from a supposition that it was haunted by a ghost: I believe *the Bogle of Bell's Lakes* has been heard of through a great part of the south of Scotland. It happened at length, that a man and his wife were casting peats at Craighope-head, a full mile from the Lakes; and coming to a loose place in the morass, his spade slipped lightly down, and stuck fast in something below; but judge of their surprise, when, on pulling it out, a man's head stuck on it, with long auburn hair, and so fresh, that every feature was distinguishable. This happened in the author's remembrance; and it was supposed that it was the head of one Adam Hyslop, who had vanished about forty years before, and was always supposed to have left the country. Since that discovery, however, Bell's Lakes have been as free of bogles as any other place.

He prayed, an' he read, an' he sent them to bed;

Then the Bible anunder his arm took he,

An' round an' round the mill-house he gade,

To try if this terrible sight he could see.—v. 22.

A story similar to this of Mr Boston and the pedlar, is told of a contemporary of his, the Rev. Henry Davieson of Gala-shiels.—The ghost of an old wicked laird of Buckholm, in that parish, who had died a long time previous to that period,

so haunted and harassed the house, that they could not get a servant to stay about it : whereupon, in compliance with the earnest entreaties of the family, Mr Davieson went up one night to speak to and rebuke it. After supper he prayed with the family, and then charged them all, as they valued their peace, to go quietly to their beds. This injunction they all obeyed ; but one lady lay down without undressing, and, from a small aperture in the partition which separated her chamber from the apartment in which he was left, watched all his motions. She said that he searched long in the Bible, and folded down leaves in certain places. He then kneeled and prayed ; and afterwards taking the Bible, and putting his fingers in at the places he had marked, he took it below his arm and went out. That, prompted by curiosity, she followed him, unperceived, through several of the haunted lanes. That she sometimes heard him muttering, but saw nothing. When he came to his chamber, he acted the same scene over again ; and she followed him at a distance round all the town, as before. That when he came to his chamber the third time, he prayed with greater fervency than ever ; and when he rose, and took the Bible to go out, his looks were so stern and severe, that she was awed at the very sight of them ; and on following him out of the court-yard, she was seized with an involuntary terror, and fled back to her apartment. When the family assembled next morning to prayers, he conjured them to tell him who of them were out of bed last night ; and the rest all denying, the lady confessed the whole. “ I knew,” said he, “ there was somebody watching me, at which I was troubled : but it was lucky for you that you did not follow me the third

time; for, had you seen what I saw, you had never been yourself again. But you may now safely go out and in, up stairs and down stairs, at all hours of the night; for you will never more be troubled with old Buckholm."

Whether these traditions have taken their origin from a much earlier period, and have, by later generations, been brought down and ascribed to these well-known characters; or whether these worthy men, in commiseration of the ideal sufferings of their visionary parishioners, have really condescended to these sham watchings, it is not now easy to determine. But an age singular as that was for devotion, would readily be as much so for superstition; for, even to this day, the country people who have the deepest sense of religion are always those who believe most firmly in supernatural agency.

Yet certain it is, from that day to this,

The millers of Thirlestane have never done weel.—v. 34.

Though a pretext can scarcely be found in the annals of superstition sufficient to authorise the ascribing of this to the murder of the pedlar so many ages before, yet the misfortunes attending the millers of Thirlestane are so obvious as to have become proverbial: and when any of the neighbours occasionally mention this, along with it the murder of the pedlar is always hinted at. And it is scarcely thirty years since one of the millers was tried for his life, for scoring a woman whom he supposed a witch. He had long suspected her as the cause of all the misfortunes attending him, and, enticing her into the kiln one Sabbath evening, he seized her forcibly, and cut the shape of the cross on her forehead. This

is called *scoring aboon the breath*, and overthrows their power of doing any further mischief.

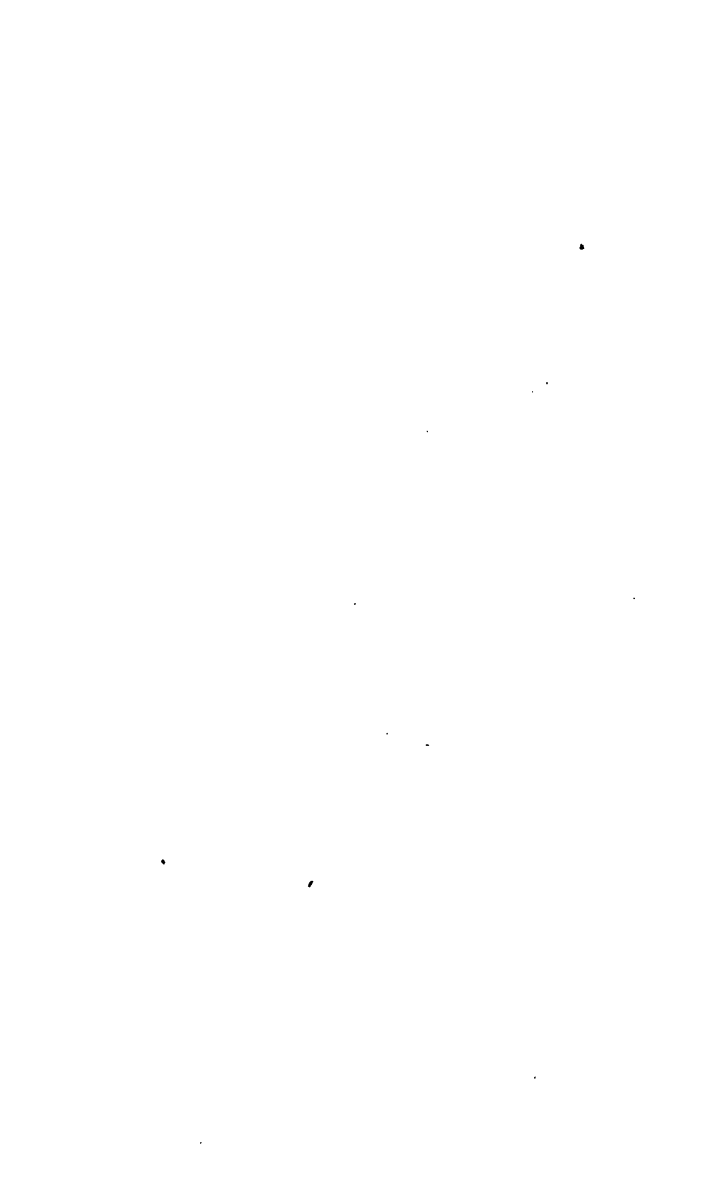
An' afterwards they in full council agreed

That Rob Riddle he richly deserved to dee.—v. 44.

This alludes to an old and very common proverb, “ That such a one will get Jeddart justice :” which is, first to hang a man, and then judge whether he was guilty or not.



GILMANSCLEUCH.



GILMANSCLEUCH.

FOUNDED UPON AN ANCIENT FAMILY TRADITION.

“ WHAIR hae ye laid the goud, Peggye,

Ye gat on New-yeir's-day?

I lookit ilka day to see

Ye drest in fine array;

“ But nouthar kirtle, cap, nor gowne,

To Peggye has come hame.

Whair hae ye stowed the goud, dochter?

I fear ye hae been to blame.”

“ My goud it was my ain, father;

A gift is ever free;

An' when I need my goud agene,

It winna be tint to me.”

“ O hae ye sent it to a friend,
Or lent it to a fae?
Or gien it to some fause leman,
To breed ye mickle wae?”

“ I hae na sent it to a friend,
Nor lent it to a fae;
An’ never man, without your ken,
Sal cause me joye or wae.

“ I gae it to a poor auld man,
Came shivering to the door;
An’ when I heard his waesome tale,
I wust my treasure more.”

“ What was the beggar’s tale, Peggye?
I fain wald hear it o’er;
I fain wald hear that wylie tale
That drained thy little store.”

“ His hair was like the thistle doune,
His cheeks were furred wi’ tyme,
His beard was like a bush o’ lyng,
When silvered o’er wi’ ryme.

“ He lifted up his languid eye,
Whilk better days had seen ;
An’ aye he heaved the mournfu’ sigh,
An’ the saut teirs fell atween.

“ He took me by the hands, and saide,
While pleasantly he smiled,
“ O weel to you, my little flower,
That blumes in desart wilde ;

“ An’ may ye never feel the waes
That lang hae followit me,
Bereavit of a’ my gudes and gear,
My friends and familye !

“ ‘ In Gilmanscleuch, beneath the heuch,
My fathers lang did dwell ;
Aye foremost, under bauld Buccleuch,
A foreign fae to quell.

“ ‘ Ilk petty robber through the lands
They taucht to stand in awe,
An’ aften checked the plundering bands
O’ their kingsman Tushilaw.

“ ‘ But when the bush was in the flush,
An’ fairer there was nane,
Ae blast did all its honours crush,
An’ Gilmanscleuch is gane !

“ ‘ I had ane brother lithe an’ stronge,
But froward, fierce, an’ keen ;
Ane only sister, sweet an’ young,
Her name was lovely Jean.

“ ‘ Her hair was like the threads of goud,
Her cheeks of rosy hue,
Her eyne were like the huntin’ hawk’s,
That owre the cassel flew.

“ ‘ Of fairest fashion was her form,
Her skin the driven snaw
That’s drifted by the wintery storm
On lofty Gilman’s-law.

“ ‘ Her browe nae blink of scorninge wore,
Her teeth were ivorie,
Her lips the little purple floure
That blumes on Bailley-lee.

“ ‘ O true true was the reade that said
That beauty’s but a snare!
Young Jock o’ Harden her betrayed,
Whilk grievit us wonder sair.

“ ‘ My brother Adam stormed in wrathe,
An’ swore in aungry mood,
Either to rychte his dear sister,
Or shed the traytor’s blood.

“ ‘ I kend his honour fair an’ firm,
An’ didna doubt his faithe ;
But being the youngest o’ seven brethren,
To marry he was laithe.

“ ‘ When June had decked the braes in grene,
An’ flushed the forest tree ;
When young deers ranne on ilka hill,
An’ lambs on ilka lee ;

“ ‘ A shepherd frae our mountains hied,
Ane ill death mot he dee !
‘ O master, master, haste !’ he cried,
‘ O haste alang wi’ me !

‘ Our ewes are banished frae the glen,
Their lambs are dri’en away,
The fairest raes on Eldin braes
Are Jock o’ Harden’s prey.

‘ His hounds are ringing through your woods,
An’ manye deere are slaine :
Ane herd is fled to Douglas-craig,
An’ ne’er will turn againe.

‘ Your brother Adam, stalworth still,
I warned on yon hill side ;
An’ he’s awa to Yarrow’s banks
As fast as he can ride.

“ ‘ O ill betide thy haste, young man !
Thou nicht hae tald it me :
Thou kend, to hunt on all my lande
The Harden lads were free.

“ ‘ Gae saddel me my milk-white steed,
Gae saddel him suddenlye;
To Yarrow banks I'll hie wi' speed,
This bauld hunter to see.

“ ‘ But low low down, on Sundhope broom,
My brother Harden spyde,
An' with a stern an' furious look
He up to him did ride.

‘ Was't not enough, thou traytor strong,
My sister to betray?
That thou shouldst scare my feebl ewes,
An' chase their lambs away.

‘ Thy hounds are ringing through our woods,
Our choizest deers are slaine,
An' hundreds fledd to Stuart's hills,
Will ne'er returne againe.’

‘ It setts thee weel, thou haughtye youth,
To bend such taunts on me :
Oft hae you hunted Harden’s hills,
An’ nae man hindered thee.’

‘ But wilt thou wedd my deare sister ?
Now tell me—ay or nay.’
‘ Nae question will I answer thee,
That’s speerit in sic a way.

‘ Tak this for truth, I ne’er meant ill
To nouthar thee nor thine.’
Then spurrit his steed against the hill,
Was fleeter than the hynde.

“ ‘ He sett a buglet to his mouth,
An’ blew baith loude and cleir ;
A sign to all his merry men
Their huntin’ to forbeir.

‘ O turn thee, turn thee, traytor stronge !’

Cried Adam bitterlie ;

‘ Nae haughtye Scott, of Harden’s kin,

Sal proudlye scool on me.

‘ Now draw thy sword, or gie thy word,

For one of them I’ll have,

Or to thy face I’ll thee disgrace,

An’ ca’ thee coward knave.’

“ ‘ He sprang frae aff his coal-black steed,

An’ tied him to a wande ;

Then threw his bonnet aff his head,

An’ drew his deadlye brande.

“ ‘ An’ lang tney foucht, an’ sair they foucht,

Wi’ swords of mettyl kene,

Till clotted blude, in mony a spot,

Was sprynkelit on the grene.

“ ‘ An’ lang they foucht, an’ sair they foucht ;
For braiver there were nane.
Braive Adam’s thigh was bathit i’ blude,
An’ Harden’s coller-bane.

“ ‘ Though Adam was baith stark an’ gude,
Nae langer could he stande :
His hand claive to his hivvye-sword,
His knees plett lyke the wande.

“ ‘ He leanit himsel agenst ane aek,
Nae mair could act his parte.
A wudman then sprang frae the broom,
An’ pierced young Harden’s hearte.

“ ‘ But word or groane he wheelit him round,
An’ kluve his heide in twaine ;
Then calmlye laid him on the grene,
Never to rise againe.

“ ‘ I raide owre heicht, I raide through howe,
An’ ferr outstrippit the wynde,
An’ sent my voyce the forest through,
But naething could I fynde.

“ ‘ Whan I cam there, the dymal sychte
Mochte melte ane hearte of stane ;
My brother fent an’ bleiden lay,
Young Harden neirlye gane.

‘ An’ art thou there, O Gilmanscleuch ?’
Wi’ faltren tongue he cried ;
‘ Hadst thou arrivit tyme aneuch,
Thy kinsmen hadna died.

‘ Be kind unto thy sister Jean,
Whatever may betide :
This nycht I meant, at Gilmanscleuch,
To maik of hir my bryde.

‘ But this sad fray, this fatal daye,
May breid baith dule an’ payne ;
My freckle brethren ne’er will staye,
Till they’re avengit or slayne.’

“ ‘ The wudman sleips in Sundhope broom,
Into a lowlye grave :
Young Jock they bure to Harden’s tombe,
An’ laide him wi’ the lave.

“ ‘ Thus fell that braive an’ comelye youth,
Whose arm was like the steel,
Whose very look was open truth,
Whose heart was true an’ leel.

“ ‘ It’s now full three-an’-thirty zeirs
Syn that unhappye daye,
An’ late I saw his comelye corpee,
Without the least decaye.

“ ‘ The garland cross his breist aboon
Still held its varied hue ;
The roses bloomit upon his shoon,
As faire as if they grew.

“ ‘ I raised our vassals ane an’ a’,
Wi’ mickle care an’ payne,
Expecting Harden’s furious sons,
Wi’ a’ their father’s trayne.

“ ‘ But Harden was a weirdly man,
A cunning tod was he :
He lockit his sons in prison strang,
An’ wi’ him bure the key.

“ ‘ An’ he’s awa to Holyrood,
Amang our nobles a’,
With bonnet lyke a girdel raid,
An’ hayre like Craighope snaw

“ ‘ His coat was of the forest grene,
Wi’ buttons lyke the moon ;
His breiks were o’ the guid buckskynne,
Wi’ a’ the hayre aboon ;

“ ‘ His twa-hand sword hang round his neck,
An’ rattled at his heel ;
The rowels of his silver spurs
Were of the Rippon steel ;

“ ‘ His hose were braced wi’ chains o’ airn,
An’ round wi’ tassels hung :
At ilka tramp o’ Harden’s heel,
The royal arches rung.

“ ‘ Sae braid an’ buirdlye was his bouke,
His glance sae gruff to bide,
Whene’er his braid bonnette appearit,
The menialis stepped asyde.

“ ‘ The courtlye nobles of the north
The chief with favour eyed,
For Harden’s form an’ Harden’s look
Were hard to be denied.

“ ‘ He made his plaint unto our king,
An’ magnified the deed ;
An’ high Buccleuch, with scarce fayre playe, .
Made Harden better speed.

“ ‘ Ane grant of all our lands sae fayre,
The king to him has gien ;
An’ a’ the Scotts of Gilmanscleuch
Were outlawed ilka ane.

“ ‘ The time I missit, an’ never wissit
Of siccan a weird for me,
Till I got word frae kind Traquare,
The country soon to flee ;

“ ‘ Else me an’ mine nae friend wad fynd,
But fa’ ane easy preye ;
While yet my brother weaklye was,
An’ scarce could bruik the way.

“ ‘ Now I hae foucht in foreign fields,
In mony a bluidy fray,
But langed to see my native hills,
Afore my dying day.

“ ‘ My brother fell in Hungarye,
When fighting by my side ;
My luckless sister bore ane son,
But broke hir hearte an’ died.

“ ‘ That son, now a’ my earthly care,
Of port an’ stature fine :
He has thine eye, an’ is thy blude,
As weel as he is mine.

“ ‘ For me, I’m but a puir auld man,
Whom nane regards ava.
The peaceful grave will end my care,
Where I maun shortly fa’.—

“ I ga’e him a’ my goud, father,
I gat on New-year’s-day,
An’ welcomed him to Harden-ha’,
With us a while to stay.”

“ My sweet Peggye, my kynde Peggye,
Ye aye were dear to me.
For ilka bonnet-piece ye ga’e,
My love, ye sal hae three.

“ Auld Gilmanscleuch shall share wi’ me
The table an’ the ha’;
We’ll tell of a’ our doughty deeds,
At hame an’ far awa.

“ That youth, my hapless brother’s son,
Who bears our eye an’ name,
Shalle farm the lands of Gilmanscleuch,
While Harden halds the same.

“ Nae rent, nor kane, nor service mean,
I’ll ask of him at a’;
Only to stand at my ryght hand,
When Branhholm gies the ca’.

“ A Scott muste aye support ane Scott,
When as he synketh low;
But he that proudlye lifts his heide
Muste learne his place to knowe.”



THE FRAY OF ELIBANK.

F 2



THE FRAY OF ELIBANK.

THIS ballad is likewise founded on a well-known fact. The particulars are related in the song literally as they happened, and some further explanations are added in the notes.

O WHA hasna heard o' the bauld Juden Murray,
The lord o' the Elibank castle sae high ?
An' wha hasna heard o' that notable foray,
Whan Willie o' Harden was caught wi' the kye ?

Auld Harden was ever the king o' gude fellows,
His tables were filled in the room an' the ha' ;
But peace on the Border, that thinned his keyloes,
An' want for his lads was the warst thing of a'.

Young Harden was bauld of heart as a lion,
An' langed his skill an' his courage to try:
Stout Willie o' Fauldshope ae night he did cry on,
Frae danger or peril wha never wad fly.

" O Willie, ye ken our retainers are mony,
Our kye they rowt thin on the loan an' the lee;
A drove we maun hae for our pastures sae bonny,
Or Harden's *ae com* ance again we may see.

" Fain wad I, but darena, gang over the Border;
Buccleuch wad restrain us, an' ruin us quite;
He's bound to keep a' the wide marches in order:
Then where shall we gae, an' we'll venture to-night?"

" O master, ye ken how the Murrays have ground you,
An' aften caroused on your beef an' your veal;
Yet, spite o' your wiles an' your spies, they hae shunned you.
A Murray is kittler to catch than the deil.

“ Sly Juden o’ Eli’s grown doyted an’ silly,
He sits wi’ his women frae morning till e’en ;
Yet three hunder gude kye has the thrifty auld billy,
As fair sleekit keyloes as ever were seen.”

“ Then, Willie, this night we’ll gae herry auld Juden ;
Nae danger I fear when thy weapon I see :
That time when we vanquished the outlaw o’ Sowden,
The best o’ his men were mishackered by thee.

“ If we had his kye in the byres of Aekwood,
He’s welcome to claim them the best way he can.
Right sair he’ll be puzzled his title to make good,
For a’ he’s a cunning an’ dexterous man.”

Auld Juden he strayed by the side o’ the river,
When loud cried the warder on Hanginshaw height,
“ Ho, Juden, take care, or you’re ruined for ever !
The bugle of Aekwood is sounding to-night.”

“ Ha, faith !” then quo’ Juden, “ they’re nae men to lippen ;

I wonder sae lang frae a fray they could cease.

Gae blaw the wee horn, gar my villains come trippin’ :

I have o’er mony kye to get restit in peace.”

Wi’ that a swaup fellow came puffin’ an’ blawin’,

Frae high Philip-cairn a’ the gate he had run :

“ O Juden, be handy, an’ countna the lawin,

But warn well an’ arm well, or else ye’re undone !

“ Young Willie o’ Harden has crossed the Yarrow,

Wi’ mony a hardy an’ desperate man :

The Hoggs an’ the Brydens have brought him to dare you,

For the Wild Boar of Fauldshope he strides in the van.”

“ God’s mercy !” quo’ Juden, “ gae blaw the great bugle ;

Warn Plora, Traquair, an’ the fierce Hollowlee.

We’ll gie them a fleg : but I like that cursed Hogg ill ;

Nae devil in hell but I rather wad see.

' To him men in arms are the same thing as thistles ;
At Ancram an' Sowden his prowess I saw :
but a bullet or arrow will supple his bristles,
An' lay him as laigh as the least o' them a'."

The kye they lay down by the side of the Weel,
On the Elibank craig, an' the Ashiesteel bourn ;
An' ere the king's elwand came over the hill,
Afore Will an' his men rattled mony a horn.

but Juden, as cunning as Harden was strang,
On ilka man's bonnet has placed a white feather ;
An' the night being dark, to the Peel height they thrang,
An' closely they darnit them amang the deep heather,

Where the brae it was steep, an' the kye they did wend,
An' sair for their pastures forsaken they strave ;
Till Willie o' Fauldshope, wi' half o' the men,
Gade aff wi' a few, to encourage the lave.

Nae sooner was Willie gane over the height,
Than up start the Murrays, an' fiercely set on ;
An' sic a het fight, i' the howe o' the night,
In the Forest of Ettrick has never been known.

Soon weapons were clashing, an' fire was flashing,
An' red ran the blude down the Ashiesteel brae :
The parties were shouting, the kye they were rowting,
An' rattling, an' gallopping aff frae the fray.

But tho' weapons were clashing, an' the fire it was flashing,
Tho' the wounded an' dying did dismally groan,
Tho' parties were shouting, the kye they came rowting,
An' Willie o' Fauldshope drave heedlessly on.

O Willie o' Fauldshope, how sad the disaster !
Had some kindly spirit but whispered your ear,
" O Willie, return, an' relieve your kind master,
Wha's fighting surrounded wi' mony a spear."

Surrounded he was ; but his brave little band,
Determined, unmoved as the mountain, they stood :
In hopes that their hero was coming to hand,
Their master they guarded in streams of their blood.

In vain was their valour, in vain was their skill,
In vain has young Harden a multitude slain ;
By numbers o'erpowered, they were slaughtered at will,
An' Willie o' Harden was prisoner ta'en.

His hands an' his feet they hae bound like a sheep,
An' away to the Elibank tower they did hie ;
An' they locked him down in a dungeon sae deep,
An' they bade him prepare on the morrow to die.

Though Andrew o' Langhope had fa'n i' the fight,
He only lay still till the battle was by ;
Then ventured to rise, an' climb over the height,
An' there he set up a lamentable cry.

“ Ho! Willie o’ Fauldshope! Ho! are you distracted?

Ho! what’s to come o’ you? or whare are you gane?

Your friends they are slaughtered, your honour suspected,

An’ Willie o’ Harden is prisoner ta’en!”

Nae boar in the forest, when hunted an’ wounded,

Nae lion or tiger bereaved of their prey,

Did ever sae storm, or was ever sae stounded,

As Willie, when warned o’ that ruinous fray.

He threw off his jacket, wi’ harness well lined;

He threw off his bonnet well belted wi’ steel;

An’ off he has run, wi’ his troopers behind,

To rescue the lad that they likit sae weel.

But when they arrived on the Elibank green,

The yett it was shut, an’ the east it grew pale:

They slinkit away wi’ the tears i’ their een,

To tell to auld Harden their sorrowfu’ tale.

Though Harden was grieved, he durst venture nae further,
But left his poor son to submit to his fate.
“ If I lose him,” quo’ he, “ I may chance get another,
But never again wad get sic an estate.”

Some say that a stock was begun that night,
But I canna tell whether ’tis true or a lie ;
That muckle Jock Henderson, time o’ the fight,
Made off wi’ a dozen of Elibank kye.

Brave Robin o’ Singlee was cloven through the brain,
An’ Kirkhope was woundit, an’ young Bailleylee.
Wi’ Juden, baith Gatehope an’ Flora were slain,
An’ auld Ashiesteel gat a cut on the knee.

An’ mony a brave fellow, cut off in their bloom,
Lie rotting in cairns on the bank o’ the Steele.
Weep o’er them, ye shepherds ! how hapless their doom !
Their natures how faithful, undaunted, an’ leel !

The lady o' Elibank rase wi' the dawn,

An' she wakened auld Juden, an' to him did say,—

“ Pray, what will ye do wi' this gallant young man ? ”

“ We'll hang him,” quo' Juden, “ this very same day.”

“ Wad ye hang sic a brisk an' a gallant young heir,

An' has three hamely daughters aye suffering neglect ?

Though laird o' the best o' the Forest sae fair,

He'll marry the warst for the sake of his neck.

“ Despise not the lad for a perilous feat ;

He's a friend will bestead you, an' stand by you still :

The laird maun hae men, an' the men maun hae meat,

An' the meat maun be had, be the danger what will.”

Then owre his left knee Juden laid his huge leg,

An' he mused, an' he thought that his lady was right.

“ By Heaven,” said he, “ he shall marry my Meg ;

I dreamed, an' I dreamed o' her a' the last night.”

Now Meg was but thin, an' her nose it was lang,
An' her mou' it was muckle as ane could weel be ;
Her een they were gray, an' her colour was wan ;
But her nature was generous, gentle, an' free.

Her shape it was slender, her manners refined,
Her shoulders were clad wi' her lang dusky hair,
An' three times mae beauties adorned her mind,
Than mony a ane's that was three times as fair.

Poor Will wi' a guard was brought into a ha',
Ae end hung wi' black, an' the ither full fair ;
There Juden's three daughters sat in a raw,
An' himsel at the head in a twa-elbow chair.

" Now, Will, as ye're young, an' I hope ye may mend,
On the following conditions I grant ye your life :—
That ye be mair wary, an' auld Juden's friend,
An' accept o' my daughter there, Meg, for your wife.

“ An’ since ye’re sae set on my Elibank kye,
Ye’s hae each o’ your drove ye can ken by the head ;
An’ if nae horned acquaintance should kythe to your eye,
Ye shall wale half a score, an’ a bull for a breed.

“ My Meg, I assure you, is better than bonnie ;
I rede you, in choicing let prudence decide ;
Then say which ye will ; ye are welcome to ony :
See, there is your coffin, or there is your bride.”

“ Lead on to the gallows, then,” Willie replied ;
“ I’m now in your power, an’ ye carry it high ;
Nae daughter of yours shall e’er lie by my side ;
A Scott, ye maun mind, counts it naething to die.”

“ Amen ! then,” quo’ Juden, “ your raid you shall rue,
Gae lead out the reaver loun straight to his deide ;
My Meg, let me tell him, ’s the best of the two :
An’ bring him the bedesman, for great is his need.”

When Willie saw the tether drawn over the tree,
His courage misgae him, his heart it grew sair ;
He watched Juden's face an' he watched his ee,
But the devil a scrap of reluctance was there.

He fand the last gleam of his hope was a fadin' ;
The green braes o' Harden nae mair he wad see.
The coffin was there, which he soon must be laid in ;
His proud heart was humbled,—he fell on his knee.

“ O sir, but ye're hurried—I humbly implore ye,
To grant me three days to examine my mind ;
To think on my sins, an' the prospect before me,
An' balance your offer of freedom sae kind.”

“ My friendship ye spurned ; my daughter ye scorned ;
Forthwith in the air ye shall flaff at the spauld :
A preciouser villain my tree ne'er adorned ;
Hang a rogue when he's young, he'll steal nane when
he's auld.

" Then here is my daughter's hand, there is the rood,
This moment take the one, or the other the niest ;
'Tis all for your country an' countrymen's good—
See there is the hangman, or here is the priest."

But Willie now fand he was fairly i' the wrang,
That marriage an' death were twa different things.—
" What matter," quo' he, " though her nose it be lang ?
For noses bring luck, an' it's welcome that brings."

" There's something weel-faurd in her soncy gray een,
But they're better than nane, an' ane's life is sae sweet ;
An', what though her mou' be the maist I hae seen ?
Faith, muckle-mou'd fock hae a luck for their meat."

That day they were wedded, that night they were bedded,
An' Juden has feasted them gaily an' free ;
But aft the bridegroom has he rallied an' bladded,
What faces he made at the big hanging tree.

He swore that his mou' was grown wider than Meg's ;
That his face frae the chin was a half a yard high ;
That it struck wi' a palsy his knees an' his legs ;
For a' that *a Scott thought it naething to die !*

“ There's naething,” quo' Juden, “ that I mair approve,
Than a rich Forest laird to come stealin' my kye ;
Wad Branxholm an' Thirlestane come for a drove,
I wad furnish them wives in their bosoms to lie.”

So Willie took Meg to the Forest sae fair,
An' they lived a most happy an' social life ;
The langer he kend her, he loed her the mair,
For a prudent, a virtuous, and honourable wife.

An' muckle gude blude frae that union has flow'd,
An' mony a brave fellow, an' mony a brave feat ;
I darena just say they are a' muckle mou'd,
But they rather have still a gude luck for their meat.

NOTES

TO

THE FRAY OF ELIBANK.

*O wha hasna heard o' the bauld Juden Murray,
The lord of the Elibank castle sae high?—v. 1.*

SIR GIDEON MURRAY, ancestor of the present Lord Elibank, was the third son of Andrew Murray of Blackbarony. In his youth he applied to the study of theology; but, happening unfortunately to kill a man of the name of Aitchison, he was imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle. He now gave up all thoughts of the church, and became chamberlain to his nephew of the half blood, Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch, which trust he managed with great prudence. He was first designed of Glenpottie, and had a charter of the lands of Elibank, alias Eliburne, in the county of Selkirk, with a salmon fishing in Tweed, 15th March, 1594–5. He now took the style of Elibank, and had charters to himself, and Margaret Pentland his wife, of the lands of Langechaw, in Roxburghshire, 6th June 1606, and 2d July 1618. He had several other charters un-

der the great seal, of Redhead in the county of Peebles, Eldin-hope in the county of Selkirk, and Ballincrieff in the county of Haddington, &c. He received the honour of knighthood in 1605; was constituted treasurer-depute in 1611, under the Earl of Somerset, high treasurer; and appointed one of the Lords of Session, 2d November 1613.

The entire direction of the revenue of Scotland was in Sir Gideon Murray's hands, and he managed it to such advantage, that he not only repaired the palaces and castles of Holyrood-house, Edinburgh, Linlithgow, Stirling, Dunfermline, Falkland, and Dunbarton, adding to them all new edifices, but had so much money in the treasury, when King James VI. visited Scotland in 1617, that he defrayed the whole charges of his Majesty and his Court during his abode in that country, where the king appeared with as much splendour as in England. James had a very high sense of his services. Sir Gideon, visiting his Majesty in England; and happening in the king's bed-chamber to let his glove fall, James, although stiff and old, stooped down, and gave him his glove again, saying, "My predecessor, Queen Elizabeth, thought she did a favour to any man who was speaking to her when she let her glove fall, that he might take it up and give it to her again; but, Sir, you may say a king lifted up your glove." Yet, for all that, his Majesty was induced to believe an accusation given by James Stewart, Lord Ochiltree, against Sir Gideon Murray, charging him with offences committed in his office of treasurer-depute against the king and his lieges. He was sent down a prisoner to Scotland, and a day appointed for his trial. This he took so much to heart, that he abstained from food for se-

veral days, and he died on the 28th June 1621, after he had kept his house twenty days or thereby, stupified and silent, or at least speaking little or to no purpose.

An' wha hama heard o' that notable foray,

When Willie o' Harden was caught wi' the kye.—v. 1.

In the first and second editions this hero was denominated Wat. I took the story from the vague traditions of the country, and on seeing some of the family records, I perceive that these have been generally incorrect. The story is true; but the youth's name was William. He was the eldest son of Wat. Scott of Harden, and his lady, the celebrated Mary Scott, the Flower of Yarrow.

Stout Willie o' Fauldshope ae night he did cry on,

Frae danger or peril wha never wad fly.—v. 3.

This man's name was William Hogg, better known by the epithet of the *Wild Boar of Fauldshope*. Tradition reports him as a man of unequalled strength, courage, and ferocity. He was Harden's chief champion, and in great favour with his master, until once, by his temerity, he led him into a scrape that had well nigh cost him his life. It is never positively said what this scrape was, but there is reason to suppose it was the Fray of Elibank.

The Hoggs and the Brydens have brought him to dare you.—v. 13.

The author's progenitors possessed the lands of Fauldshope, under the Scotts of Harden, for ages; my father says, for a period of 400 years; until the extravagance of John Scott

occasioned the family to part with these lands. They now form part of the extensive estates of Buccleugh. Several of the wives of Fauldshope were supposed to be rank witches; and the famous witch of Fauldshope, who so terribly hectored Mr Michael Scott, by turning him into a hare, and hunting him with his own dogs, until forced to take shelter in his own jaw-hole, was one of the Mrs Hoggs, better known by the name of Lucky Hogg. The cruel retaliation which he made in showing his art to her, is also well known. It appears also, that some of the Hoggs had been poets before now, as there is still a part of an old song extant, relating much to them. Observe how elegantly it flows on:—

* * * * *

“ And the rough Hoggs of Fauldshope,
That wear baith woo' and hair;
There's nae sic Hoggs as Fauldshope's
In a' St Boswell's fair.”

And afterwards near the end:—

“ But the hardy Hoggs of Fauldshope,
For courage, blood, an' bane;
For the Wild Boar of Fauldshope,
Like him was never nane.

If ye reave the Hoggs of Fauldshope,
Ye herry Harden's gear;
But the poor Hoggs of Fauldshope,
Have had a stormy year.”

H

The Brydens, too, have long been a numerous and respectable clan in Ettrick Forest and its vicinity.

Wad ye hang sic a brisk, an' a gallant young heir,

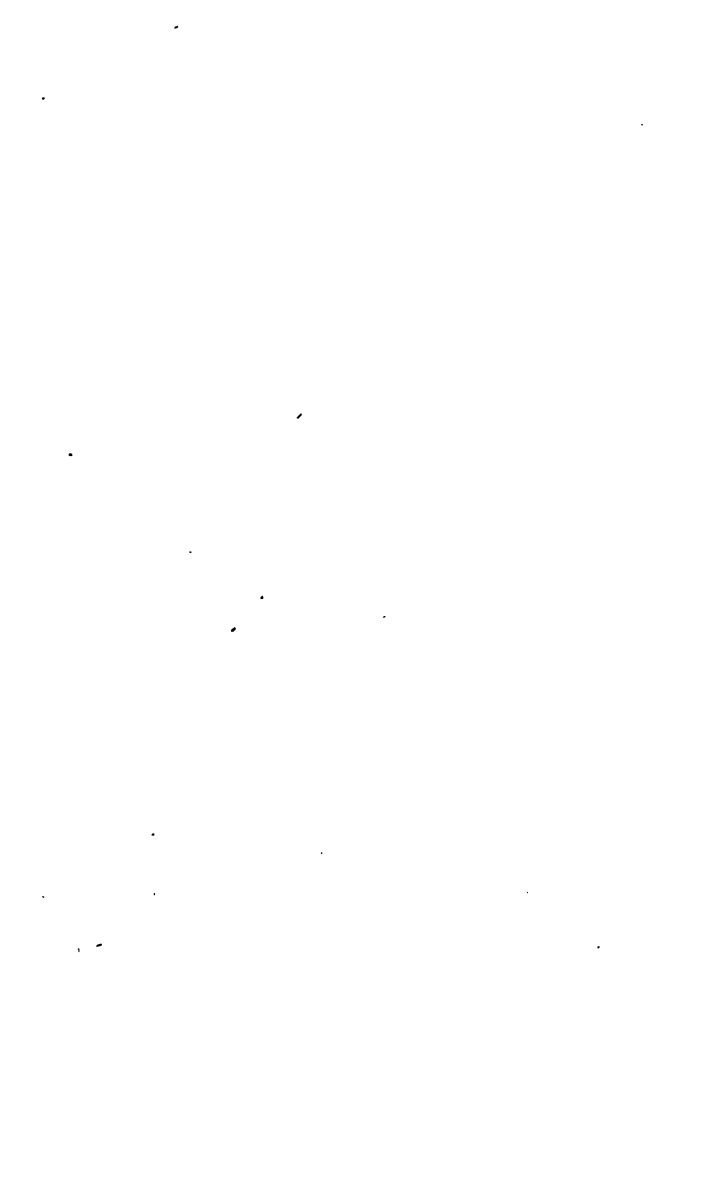
An' has three hamely daughters aye suffering neglect?—v. 36.

This is another traditional mistake, but I cannot think to alter the ballad from its “rough, rude, rugged homeliness.” Sir Gideon, however, had only one daughter, whose name was Agnes; but as there is no doubt that tradition is correct as far as relates to the lineaments of her face, and the dimensions of her mouth, she must continue to be “muckle-mou’d Meg o’ the Elibank” still.

So Willie took Meg to the Forest sae fair.—v. 57.

Though Elibank is in the Shire of Selkirk, as well as Oakwood, yet, originally, by Ettrick Forest was meant only the banks and environs of the two rivers, Ettrick and Yarrow.

MESS JOHN.



MESS JOHN.

THIS is a very popular story about Ettrick Forest, as well as a part of Annandale and Tweeddale, and is always told with the least variation, both by young and old, of any legendary tale I ever heard. It seems, like many others, to be partly founded on facts, with a great deal of romance added; for, if tradition can be in aught believed, the murder of the priest seems well attested: but I do not know if any records mention it. His surname is said to have been Binram, though some suppose that it was only a nickname; and the mount under which he was buried, still retains the name of Binram's Corse. A gentleman of this country, with whom I lately conversed, strove to convince me that I had placed the era of the tale too late, for that it must have had its origin from a much earlier age. But when was there ever a more romantic, or more visionary age, than that to which this ballad refers? Besides, it is certain, that the two heroes, Dobson and Dun, whom every one allows to have been the first who had the courage to lay hold of the lady, and to have slain the priest, skulked about the head of Moffat water during the heat of the persecution, which they both survived. And Andrew Moore, who died at Ettrick about twenty-six years

ago, at a great age, often averred, that he had, in his youth, seen and conversed with many people, who remembered every circumstance of it, both as to the murder of the priest, and the road being laid waste by the woman running at night with a fire-pan, or, as some call it, a globe of fire on her head. This singular old man could repeat by heart every old ballad which is now published in the "Minstrelsy of the Border," except three, with three times as many; and from him, *Auld Maitland*, with many ancient songs and tales, still popular in that country, are derived.

If I may then venture a conjecture at the whole of this story, it is no wise improbable, that the lass of Craigieburn was some enthusiast in religious matters, or perhaps a lunatic; and that, being troubled with a sense of guilt, and a squeamish conscience, she had, on that account, made several visits to St Mary's Chapel to obtain absolution: and it is well known that many of the Mountain-men wanted only a hair to make a tether of. Might they not then frame this whole story about the sorcery, on purpose to justify their violent procedure in the eyes of their countrymen, as no bait was more likely to be swallowed at that time? But, however it was, the reader has the story, in the following ballad, much as I have it. The mound which bears the priest's name was raised last year by two gentlemen from Edinburgh, and a small chest full of ashes, and one or two human teeth were found, which proves the antiquity of the Cairn of Binram's Cross, whoever may have been buried under it.

MESS JOHN.

MESS JOHN stood in St Mary's Kirk,
And preached and prayed so mightilye ;
No monk nor abbot in the land,
Could preach or pray so well as he.

The words of peace flowed from his tongue,
His heart seemed rapt with heavenly flame,
And thousands would the chapel throng,
So distant flew his pious fame.

His face was like the rising moon,
Imblushed with evening's purple dye ;
His stature like the graceful pine,
That grew on Bowerhope hills so high.

Mess John lay on his lonely couch,
And oft he sighed and sorely pined ;
A smothered flame consumed his heart,
And tainted his capacious mind.

It was not for the nation's sin;
Nor Kirk oppressed that he did mourn ;
'Twas for a little earthly flower—
The bonny lass of Craigieburn.

Whene'er his eyes with her's did meet,
They pierced his heart without remede ;
And when he heard her voice so sweet,
Mess John forgot to say his creed.

“ Curse on our foolish law,” he said,
“ That chains us back from social joy ;
The sweetest bliss to mortals lent,
I cannot taste without alloy !

“ Give misers wealth, and monarchs power ;
Give heroes kingdoms to o’erturn ;
Give sophists latent depths to scan—
Give me the lass of Craigieburn.”

O passion ! what can thee surpass ?
Mess John’s religious zeal is flown ;
A priest in love is like the grass,
That fades ere it be fairly grown.

When thinking on her liquid eye,
Her maiden form so fair and gay,
Her limbs, the polished ivorye,
His heart, like wax, would melt away !

He tried the hom’lies to rehearse,
He tried it both by night and day ;
But all his lair and logic failed,
His thoughts were on the bonny May.

He said the creed, he sung the mass,
And o'er the breviary did turn ;
But still his wayward fancy eyed
The bonny lass of Craigieburn.

One day upon his lonely couch
He lay, a prey to passion fell ;
And aft he turned—and aft he wished
What bedesman's tongue durst hardly tell.

A sudden languor chilled his blood,
And quick o'er all his senses flew ;
But what it was, or what the cause,
He neither wished to know, nor knew :

He weened he heard the thunder roll,
And then a laugh of malice keen ;
Fierce whirlwinds shook the mansion-walls,
And grievous sobs were heard between :

And then a maid, of beauty bright,
With blushing cheek, and claithing thin,
And many a fascinating air,
To his bedside came gliding in.

A silken mantle on her feet
Fell down in many a fold and turn,
Too well he knew the lovely form
Of bonny May of Craigieburn !

Though eye, and tongue, and every limb
Lay moveless as the mountain rock,
Yet fast his fluttering pulses played,
As thus the enticing demon spoke :—

“ Poor heartless man ! and wilt thou lie
A prey to this devouring flame ?
That this fair form is not thine own,
None but thyself hast thou to blame.

“ Thou little know'st the fervid fires
In female breasts that burn so clear !
The forward youth of fierce desires
To us is most supremely dear.

“ Who ventures most to gain our charms,
By us is ever most approved ;
The ardent kiss and clasping arms,
By maid is ever best beloved.

“ Then mould this form of fairest wax,
With adders eyes, and feet of horn :
Place this small scroll within its breast,
Which I from love have hither borne.

“ And make a blaze of alder wood,
Before your fire make that to stand ;
And the last night of every moon
Your bonny May's at your command.

“ With fire and steel to urge her weel,
 See that you neither stint nor spare;
 For if the cock be heard to crow
 The charm will vanish into air.”

Then bristly, bristly, grew her hair,
 Her colour changed to black and blue;
 And broader, broader, grew her face,
 Till with a yell away she flew!

The charm was gone,—upstarts Mess John;
 A statue now behold him stand!
 Fain, fain he would suppose’t a dream—
 But, lo! the scroll is in his hand.

Read through this tale, and as you pass,
 You’ll cry, alas! the priest’s a man!
 And man’s a worm, and flesh is grass,
 And stand himself he never can.

Within the chaplain's sinful cell
Is done a deed without a name ;
The lovely moulded image stands
A-melting at the alder flame.

The charm of wickedness prevails,
The eye of Heaven is shut for sin ;
The maid of Craigieburn is seized
With burning of the soul within.

“ O Father dear ! what ails my heart ?
Ev'n but this minute I was well ;
And now, though still in health and strength,
I suffer half the pains of hell.”

“ My bonny May, my darling child !
Ill wots thy father what to say ;
I fear 'tis for some secret sin
That Heaven this scourge on thee doth lay.

“ Confess, and to thy Maker pray ;
He's kind ; be firm, and banish fear ;
He'll lay no more on my poor child
Than he gives strength of mind to bear.”

“ A thousand poignards pierce my heart !
I feel, I feel, I must away ;
Yon holy man at Mary's Kirk
Will pardon and my pains allay.

“ I mind, when on a doleful night,
A picture of this black despair
Was fully open to my sight,
A vision bade me hasten there.”

“ O stay, my child, till morning dawn,
The night is dark, 'and danger nigh,
The hill-men in their wildered haunts
Will shoot thee for a nightly spy.

“ 'Mong wild Polmoody's mountains green,
Fully many a wight their vigils keep ;
Where roars the torrent from Loch Skene,
A troop is lodged in trenches deep.

“ The howling fex and raving earn
Will scare thy reason quite away ;
Regard thy sex and tender youth,
And stay, my child, till dawning day.”

But burning, raging, wild with pain,
By moorland cleuch and dark defile,
Away with many a shriek she ran
Straight forward for Saint Mary's aisle.

And lo ! a magic lanthorn bright
Hung on the birks of Craigieburn ;
She placed the wonder on her head,
Which shone around her like the sun.

She ran, impelled by racking pain,
Through rugged ways and waters wild ;
Where art thou, guardian spirit, fled ?
Oh haste to save an only child !

Hold !—he who doats on earthly things,
'Tis fit their frailty should appear ;
Hold !—they who Providence accuse,
'Tis just their folly cost them dear.

The God who guides the gilded moon,
And rules the rough and rolling sea,
Without a trial ne'er will leave
A soul to evil destiny.

When crossing Meggat's Highland strand,
She stopt to hear an eldritch scream ;
Loud crowed the cock at Henderland,
The charm evanished like a dream !

The magic lanthorn left her head,
And, darkling, now return she must.
She wept, and cursed her hapless doom ;
She wept—and called her God unjust.

But on that sad revolving day,
The racking pains again return ;
And wanders on her nightly way,
The bonny lass of Craigieburn.

And back unto her father's hall,
Weeping she journeys, ruined quite :
And still on that returning day,
Yields to a monster's hellish might.

But o'er the scene we'll draw a veil,
Wet with the tender tear of woe ;
For we must to our magic tale,
And all the shepherd's terrors show.

Once every month the spectre ran,
With shrieks would any heart appal ;
And every maid, and every man,
Astonished fled at evening fall.

A bonny widow went at night
To meet the lad she loved so well ;
“ Ah ! yon’s my former husband’s sprite ! ”
She cried, and into faintings fell.

An honest tailor, leaving work,
Met with the lass of Craigieburn ;
It was enough—he breathed his last !
One shriek had done the tailor’s turn.

A mountain-preacher quat his horse,
And prayed aloud with lengthened phis ;
The damsel yelled—the father kneeled—
Dundee was but a joke to this !

Young Laidlaw of the Chapelhope,
Enraged to see the road laid waste,
Waylaid the damsel with a gun,
But in a panic home was chased.

But drunken John of Keppel-Gill;
Met with her on Carrifran guns;
He staggering cried, "Who devil's that?"
Then plashing on, cried, "Faith, God kens!"

The Cameronians left their camp,
And scattered wide o'er many a hill;
Pursued by men, pursued by hell,
They stoutly held their tenets still.

But at the source of Moffat's stream,
Two champions of the cov'nant dwell,
Who long had braved the power of men,
And fairly beat the prince of hell:

Armed with a gun, a rowan-tree rung,
A bible, and a scarlet twine,
They placed them on the Birkhill path,
And saw afar the lanthorn shine.

And nearer, nearer, still it drew,
At length they heard her piercing cries ;
And louder, louder, still they prayed,
With aching heart, and upcast eyes !

The Bible, spread upon the brae,
No sooner did the light illumine,
Than straight the magic lanthorn fled,
And left the lady in the gloom.

With open book, and haggart look,
“ Say what art thou ? ” they loudly cry ;
“ I am a woman—let me pass,
Or quickly at your feet I’ll die.

“ O let me run to Mary’s Kirk,
Where, if I’m forced to sin and shame,
A gracious God will pardon me,—
My heart was never yet to blame.”

Armed with the gun, the rowan-tree rung,
The Bible, and the scarlet twine,
With her they trudged to Mary’s Kirk
To execute the will divine.

When nigh Saint Mary’s aiale they drew,
Rough winds, and rapid rains began ;
The livid lightning linked flew,
And round the rattling thunder ran.

The torrents rush, the mountains quake,
The sheeted ghosts run to and fro ;
And deep and long, from out the lake,
The Water-Cow was heard to low.

The mansion then seemed in a blaze,
And issued forth a sulphurous smell ;
An eldritch laugh went o'er their heads,
Which ended in a hellish yell.

Bauld Halbert ventured to the cell,
And, from a little window, viewed
The priest and Satan close engaged
In hellish rites and orgies lewd.

A female form, of melting wax,
Mess John surveyed with steady eye,
Which ever and anon he pierced,
Forcing the lady loud to cry.

Then Halbert raised his trusty gun,
Was loaded well with powder and ball,
And, aiming at the chaplain's head,
He blew his brains against the wall.

The devil flew with such a clap,
On door nor window did not stay ;
And loud he cried, in jeering tone,
“ Ha, ha, ha, ha, poor John’s away !”

East from the kirk and holy ground,
They bare that lump of sinful clay,
And o’er him raised a mighty mound,
Called Binram’s Corse unto this day.

And ay when any lonely wight,
By yon dark cleugh is forced to stray,
He hears that cry at dead of night,
“ Ha, ha, ha, ha, poor John’s away !”

NOTES

TO

MESS JOHN.

Mess John stood in St Mary's Kirk.—v. 1.

THE ruins of St Mary's Chapel are still visible, in a wild scene on the banks of the lake of that name; but the mansion in which the monk, or, as some call him, the curate, lived, was almost erased of late, for the purpose of building a stone-wall round the old church and burying ground. This chapel is, in some ancient records, called *The Maiden Kirk*, and, in others, *The Kirk of Saint Mary of the Lowes*.

His stature like the graceful pine,

That grew on Bowerhope hills so high.—v. 3.

The hills of Bowerhope, on the south side of the loch, opposite to the chapel, rise to the height of two thousand feet above the sea's level, and were, like much of that country, formerly covered with wood.

K

A silken mantle on her feet

Fell down in many a fold and turn.—v. 17.

It is a vulgar received opinion, that, let the devil assume what appearance he will, were it even that of an angel of light, yet still his feet must be cloven ; and that if he do not contrive some means to cover them, they will lead to a discovery of him and his intentions, which are only evil, and that continually. It is somewhat curious, that they should rank him among the clean beasts, which divide the hoof. They believe, likewise, that he and his emissaries can turn themselves into any shape they please, of all God's creatures, excepting those of a lion, a lamb, and a dove. Consequently their situation is the most perilous that can be conceived ; for, when it begins to grow dark, they cannot be sure, but almost all the beasts and birds they see are either deils or witches. Of cats, hares, and swine, they are particularly jealous ; and a caterwauling noise hath often turned men from going to see their sweethearts, and even from seeking the midwife. And I knew a girl, who returned home after proceeding ten miles on a journey, from the unlucky and ominous circumstance of an ugly bird crossing the road three times before her : neither did her parents at all disapprove of what she had done.

Thou little knowest the fervid fires

In female breasts that burn so clear ;

The froward youth of fierce desires

To us is most supremely dear.

*Who ventures most to gain our charms,
By us is ever most approved ;
The ardent kiss, and clasping arms,
By maid is ever best beloved.*—v. 20. 21.

If any of my fair readers should quarrel with the sentiments manifested in these two stanzas, they will recollect that they are the sentiments of a fiend, who, we must suppose, was their mortal enemy, and would not scruple to paint their refined sensibility in very false colours, or, at least, from a very wrong point of view.

*With fire and steel to urge her wheel,
See that you neither stint nor spare.*—v. 24.

The story says, that the priest was obliged to watch the picture very constantly ; and that always when the parts next the fire began to soften, he stuck pins into them, and exposed another side ; that, when each of these pins were stuck in, the lady uttered a piercing shriek ; and that, as their number increased in the waxen image, her torment increased, and caused her to haste on with amazing speed.

*'Mong wild Polmoody's mountains green,
Full many a wight their vigils keep.*—v. 36.

The mountains of Polmoody, besides being the highest, are the most inaccessible in the South of Scotland : and great numbers from the western counties, found shelter on them during the heat of the persecution. Many of these, it is supposed, were obliged to shift for their sustenance by stealing sheep ; yet the country people, from a sense that *Necessity has no law*,

winked at the loss ; their sheep being in those days, of less value than their meal, of which they would otherwise have been obliged to part with a share to the sufferers. Part of an old ballad is still current in that neighbourhood, which relates their adventures, and the difficulties they laboured under for want of meat, and in getting hold of the sheep during the night. Some of the country people, indeed, ascribe these depredations to the persecutors ; but it is not likely that they would put themselves to so much trouble. I remember only a few stanzas of this ballad, which are as follow :

* * * * *

“ Carrifran Gans they ’re very strait,
 We canna gang without a road ;
 But tak ye the tae side, an’ me the tither,
 An’ they ’ll a’ come in at Firthup dod.

* * * * *

“ On Turnberry, an’ Carrifran Gans,
 An’ out amang the Moodlaw haggs,
 They worried the feck o’ the Laird’s lambs,
 An’ eatit them raw, an’ buried the baggs.

* * * * *

“ Had Guemshope Castle a tongue to speak,
 Or mouth o’ flesh, that it could fathom,
 It wad tell o’ mony a supple trick,
 Was done at the foot o’ Rotten-Boddom :
 Where Donald and his hungry men,
 Oft houghed them up wi’ little din,
 An’, mair intent on flesh than yarn,
 Bure aff the bouk, an’ buried the skin.”

This Guemahope is an extensive wild glen on the further side of these mountains ; and, being in former times used as a common, to which many of the gentlemen and farmers of Tweeddale, drove their flocks to feed during the summer months, consequently, it would be at that season a very fit place for a prey. The Donald mentioned may have been the famous Donald Cargill, a Cameronian preacher of great notoriety at the period.

*Where roars the torrent from Loch-Skene,
A troop is lodged in trenches deep.—v. 36.*

There are sundry cataracts in Scotland, which bear the name of *The Gray Mare's Tail* : in particular one in the parish of Closeburn, in Nithedale ; and one betwixt Stranraer and Newton-Stewart ; but that of Polmoody, on the border of Annandale, surpasses them all ; as the water, with only one small intermission, falls from a height of 300 yards. This, with the rocks overhanging it on each side, when the water is flooded, greatly excels any thing I ever saw in awful grandeur. Immediately below it, in the straitest part of that narrow pass, which leads from Annandale into Yarrow, a small strong entrenchment is visible. It is called by the country people *The Giant's Trench*. It is of the form of a crescent, and is defended behind by a bank. As it is not nearly so much grown up as those at Philiphaugh, it is probable that a handful of the covenanters might fortify themselves there, during the time that their brethren were in arms. But it is even more probable, that a party of the king's troops might be posted for some time in that important pass : as it is certain that Claverhouse made

two sweeping circuits of that country, and, the last time, took many prisoners in the immediate vicinity of this situation. May we not likewise suppose, that the outrage committed at Saint Mary's Kirk, might contribute to his appearance in those parts ?

*Young Laidlaw of the Chapelhope,
Enraged to see the road laid waste,
Waylaid the damsel with a gun.—v. 52.*

The Laidlaws of the Chapelhope, either favoured or pitied the covenanters ; for they fed and sheltered great numbers of them, even to the impairing of their fortunes. On Dundee's first approach to these parts, Mrs Laidlaw went out to the road, and invited him and all his men to partake of a liberal refreshment, which they thankfully accepted ; and this being a principal family, he went away so thoroughly convinced of the attachment of that neighbourhood to the royal cause, that a scrutiny was not only at that time effectually prevented, but the troops returned no more thither for many years, until the license which was there enjoyed gathered such numbers, that it became quite notorious. The spots where conventicles were held on these grounds, are still well known, and pointed out by some devout shepherds, with anecdotes of the preachers, or some of the leading characters that frequented them. One can scarcely believe, but that Mr Graham had visited these spots, or had been present on them when he wrote the following lines :

“ O'er hills, through woods, o'er dreary wastes, they sought
The upland moors, where rivers, there but brooks,
Dispart to different seas. Fast by such brooks,

A little glen is sometimes scooped ; a plat
 With green-sward gay, and flowers, that strangers seem
 Amid the heathery wild, that all around
 Fatigues the eye."—

These lines, with the two following pages of the sweet poem in which they occur, seem to be literal sketches of these scenes, as well as a representation of the transactions which then took place : For years more gloomy followed ; and from these " green-swards gay," they were driven into the " deep dells, by rocks o'ercanopied." Thus it was high up in Ryskinhope where Renwick preached his last sermon, above the lakes, the sources of the Yarrow, where there is neither plat nor plain, but linns and moors. When he prayed that day, few of the hearers' cheeks were dry. My parents were well acquainted with a woman whom he there baptized.

*But at the source of Moffat stream,
 Two champions of the cov'nant dwell ;
 Who long had braved the power of men,
 And fairly beat the prince of hell—v. 55.*

These men's names were Halbert Dobson, and David Dun ; better known by those of Hab Dob, and Davie Din. The remains of their cottage are still visible, and sure never was human habitation contrived on such a spot. It is on the very brink of a precipice, which is 400 feet of perpendicular height, whilst another of half that height overhangs it above. To this they resorted in times of danger for a number of years ; and the precipice is still called *Dob's Linn*.

There is likewise a natural cavern in the bottom of the linn farther up, where they, with other ten, hid themselves for several days, while another kept watch upon the Path-know ; and they all assembled at the cottage during the night.

Tradition relates further of these two champions, that, while they resided at the cottage by themselves, the devil appeared to them every night, and plagued them exceedingly ; striving often to terrify them, so as to make them throw themselves over the linn. But one day they contrived a hank of red yarn in the form of crosses, which it was impossible the devil could pass : and, on his appearance at night, they got in behind him, and attacked him resolutely with each a Bible in one hand, and a rowan-tree staff in the other, and after a desperate encounter, they succeeded in tumbling him headlong over the linn ; but to prevent hurting himself, at the moment he was overcome, he turned himself into a batch of skins ! It was not those of stolen sheep we hope. Credulity has been at this time very prevalent among the Scots, else such a story never could have obtained the least credit ; yet, it is said, these men were wont to tell it as long as they lived, concluding it always with the observation, that the devil had never more troubled them, as he found it was not for his health.

A short rhyme is still extant relating to this singular tradition, but which seems to have been composed afterwards, as the linn is there called Dob's Linn. It seems not improbable, that the bard who composed the song above quoted was likewise the author of this ; for, like it, it is hard to say whether it is serious or burlesque.

“ Little kend the wirrikow,
What the covenant could dow !
What o’ faith, an’ what o’ fen,
What o’ might, an’ what o’ men ;
Or he had never shewn his face,
His reekit rags, an’ riven taes,*
To men o’ mak, an’ men o’ mense,
Men o’ grace, an’ men o’ sense ;
For Hab Dob, an’ Davie Din,
Dang the deil owre Dob’s Linn.

“ Weir,” quo’ he, an’ “ weir,” quo’ he,
Haud the Bible til his ee ;
Ding him owre, or thrash him down,
He’s a fause deceitfu’ loun !”—
Then he owre him, an’ he owre him,
He owre him, an’ he owre him :
Habby held him griff an’ grim,
Davie threush him liff an’ limb ;
Till like a bunch o’ barkit skins,
Down flew Satan owre the linns.”—

After seeing this, the reader will not deny, that our champions “ fairly beat the prince of hell.” See *The Brownie of Bodsbeck*.

* The “ reekit duds, and reistit phiz,” which Burns attributes to the grand enemy of mankind, is perhaps borrowed from this popular rhyme.

And deep and long, from out the lake

The Water-Cow was heard to low.—v. 63.

In some places of the Highlands of Scotland, the inhabitants are still in continual terror of an imaginary being, called *The Water Horse*. When I was travelling over the extensive and dreary isle of Lewis, I had a lad of Stornoway with me as a guide and interpreter. On leaving the shores of Loch Rogg, in our way to Harris we came to an inland lake, called, I think, Loch Alladale; and though our nearest road lay alongst the shores of this loch, Malcolm absolutely refused to accompany me that way for fear of the *Water Horse*, of which he told many wonderful stories, swearing to the truth of them; and, in particular, how his father had lately been very nigh taken by him, and that he had succeeded in decoying one man to his destruction, a short time previous to that. This spectre is likewise an inhabitant of Loch Aven, at the foot of Cairngorm, and of Loch Laggan, in the wilds betwixt Lochaber and Badenoch. Somewhat of a similar nature seems to have been the *Water Cow*, which in former times, haunted St Mary's Loch, of which some extremely fabulous stories are yet related; and though rather less terrible and malevolent than the *Water Horse*, yet, like him, she possessed the rare slight of turning herself into whatever shape she pleased, and was likewise desirous of getting as many dragged into the lake as possible. Andrew Moore, above-mentioned, said, that when he was a boy, his parents would not suffer him to go to play near the loch for fear of her; and that he remembered of seeing her once coming swimming

towards him and his comrades in the evening twilight, but they all fled, and she sunk before reaching the side. A farmer of Bowerhope once got a breed of her, which he kept for many years, until they multiplied exceedingly; and he never had any cattle thrive so well, until once, on some outrage or disrespect on the farmer's part toward them, the old dam came out of the lake one pleasant March evening, and gave such a roar, that all the surrounding hills shook again; upon which her progeny, nineteen in number, followed her all quietly into the loch, and were never more seen.

Forcing the lady loud to cry.—v. 66.

After the subject of a ballad is fairly introduced, great particularity is disgusting; therefore, the lass of Craigieburn, after this line, is no more mentioned: But the story adds that she died of a broken heart, and of the heats which she got in being forced to run so fast. Another tradition, which I heard more lately, says, that she was conveyed secretly to a nunnery in Ireland, and that her father, whose name was Nicolson, afterwards lived in Craikbeck.



THE

DEATH OF DOUGLAS,

LORD OF LIDDISDALE.

L



THE
DEATH OF DOUGLAS,
LORD OF LIDDISDALE.

THE first stanza of this song, as well as the history of the event to which it refers, is preserved by Hume of Godscroft, in his history of the house of Douglas. The author, having been successful in rescuing some excellent old songs from the very brink of oblivion, searched incessantly many years after the remains of this, until lately, by mere accident, he lighted upon a few scraps, which he firmly believes to have formed a part of that very ancient ballad. The reader may judge for himself. The first verse is from Hume, and many other single lines and couplets that are ancient occur, which are barely sufficient to distinguish the strain in which the old song hath proceeded.

THE LADYE DOUGLAS left hir bouir,

And aye sae loud as scho did call,

“ 'Tis all for guid Lord Liddisdale

Thatte I do lette these tearis downe fall.”

“ O hald your tongue, my syster deare,
And of your weepyng lette mee be:
Lord Liddisdale will hald hys owne
With ony Lord of Chrystendye.

“ Forre him yee wadna weipe or pyne,
Yffe yee hadde seene, whatte I did see,
Thatte daye hee broke the troops of Tyne,
With gylded sword of mettil free.

“ Stout Hazelburne wals movit with rage
To see hys faintyng vassalis yelde ;
And hande to hande hee did engage
Lord Liddisdale uponne the felde.

‘ Avaunte thou haughtye Scotte,” hee cryed,
‘ And homewarde to thy countrie turne ;
Say—wilt thou brave the deadlye brande,
And heavvye hande of Hazelburne ?

“ The word hadde scarcely mixt with ayre,
When Douglas’ sworde sharpe answer gae ;
And frae ane wounde baithe deipe and sair
Furth fledde the Southron’s soule awaye.

“ Madde Faucette next, with woundis transfixt,
In anguish gnawit the bluidye claye ;
Then Hallynahedde hee wheilit and fledde,
And lefte hys riche ill-gottyn prey.

“ I hae beene easte, I hae beene weste,
I hae seene dangyrs manie a ane ;
But forve ane baulde and dauntlesse breiste,
Lord Liddisdale will yelde to nane.

“ And were I called to face the face,
And bidden chuse my leader free,
Lord Liddisdale should be the man
To lead me onne to victorye.”

“ O hald your tongue my brother Johnne !

Though I haif heard you patientlye,
Lord Liddisdale is deide and gone,
And he wals slainn forre lofe of mee.

“ My littyl trew and trustye page

Has brocht the heavvy newis to mee,
Thatte my ainne lord didde hym engage ;
Where he could nouthar fighte nor fle.

“ Four of the foremaoste menne hee slew,

And four hee woundit desp'ratelye,
But cruel Douglas came behynde,
And ranne hym through the fayre bodye.

“ O wae be to thee, Agel's wodde !

O wae be to thee, Willaimis lee,
O wae be to the dastarde croud
That murderit the flour of chivalrye !

“ It walsna ragé forre Ramseye slainn,
Thatte raisit the deadlie feid sae hie ;
Nor perjured Berkeley's tymelesse death—
It wals for kyndnesse shown to mee.

“ When I wals ledde through Liddisdale,
And thirty horsemen guardynge mee ;
When thatte gude lord came to my ayde,
Sae soon as he did sette mee free !

“ The wylde burdis sang, the woodlandis rang,
And sweit the sunne shonne onne the vale ;
Then thynkna ye, my hearte wals wae
To parte with gentle Liddisdale !

“ But I will greit forre Liddisdale,
Untyl my twa black eyne rinne dry,
And I will wayl forre Liddisdale,
Als lang als I hae voyce to cry.

“ And for that guid lord I will sigh,
Untyl my heart and spirit fayl ;
And when I die, O bury mee,
Onne the lefte syde of Liddisdale.”

“ Now hald your tongue, my syster deare,
Your grief will cause baithe dule and shame ;
Synce ye were fause in sic ane cause,
The Douglas’ rage I canna blame.”

“ Gae stemm the bytter norlan gale ;
Gae bid the wylde wave cease to rowe ;
I’ll owne my lofe for Liddisdale,
Afore the kyng, my lord and you.”

He drew hys sword of nutte-browne steele,
While neid-fyre kyndlit in hys ee,
“ Renounce thy lofe, dishoneste dame,
Or thy proud kyn avengit shalle bee !”

Scho threw hyr lockis back frae hyr cheike,
And she frownit and leuch loud laughteris three,
“ When thou and my lord gies me law,
There’ll be nae mae botte hym and thee.”

Suche als thy pryde so bee thy meed,
The deide hadde never beene donne by me,
But the Douglas’ name it brookis no shame,”
And hee ranne hyr through the fayr bodye.

Scho dypt hyr fynger in hyr heartis bleide,
It wals ane brichte and ane scarlett dye ;
And scho lookit wyldlye in hys face,
And scho lookit wyldlye to the sky.

“ O thou haste donne ane manlye deide,
In bluidye letteris itt muste stande ;
But I’ll sett my mark onne thy forheid,
And I’ll put my mark onne thy rychte hande.

“ And I’ll give thee the curse of chyldlynesse,
And I mark it onne thy ruthlys brow,
And envy and pryde, thy hande shalle guide,
Untyl thou be als I am now.

“ And I telle it thee before the sunne,
And God shalle wytnesse yffe I lie,
The streime of thy lyfe is neirly runne,
My name shalle live, but thyne shalle die.”

“ Chryste sende thee succour, my faire syster,
And trew may thy wordis of bodyng bee,
Yffe there is ane leech in Scotlande can,
Hee shall cure thy woundis rychte suddenlye.

“ Forre yffe thou die’st, my syster deire,
My daies of peice onne earthe are donne,
I shalle never taste of comforte here,
But weipe and wayl beneath the sonne.

“ And yffe thou die'st, my fayre syster,
I shalle seike remissioun in Italie,
And kneile in the holye sepulchre,
Before my bones shalle reste with thee.”

But ere seiven lang monthis were come and gane,
Thatte ladyis wordis were provit to stande,
Forre thatte knychte wals rowit in his wyndinge sheit,
But scho wals the fayrest of all the lande.

And mony a lord in lofe did pyne,
Forre hyr eyne the heartis of all men drewe,
And mony a hosbande scho hathe slayne,
And evir and anon gotte newe.

All you who loveth the weirdlye deidis,
Beware of ladyis wytchinge harme,
For litand sturte, and stryffe it breidis,
And it slackenis the herte, and slymmis the arme.

Unto ane yonge manne of mettil brychte,
It workethe payne and deidlye skaithe ;
But to ane oulde and dotard wychte,
Womyn is worse than helle beneathe.

NOTES

TO

THE DEATH OF DOUGLAS, LORD OF LIDDISDALE.

So far hath the old ballad led me to whatever it may allude. If it was indeed the lady Douglas, the following is a sketch of her history. She was the only daughter of Donald the twelfth Earl of Mar, and was married, when young, to John Earl of Montith, and shortly after to William the first Earl of Douglas. But the fourth year afterwards, Douglas, growing jealous of her and his kinsman, William Lord of Liddisdale, waylaid the latter as he was hunting in William-hope, above Yair, and slew him treacherously; mastering him, as was supposed, by numbers; for William of Liddisdale was so brave and so gallant a man, that he was styled "The Flower of Chivalry." Earl Douglas pretended to his followers, that this assassination was in revenge for the deaths of Ramsey of Dalhousie, and Sir David Berkeley; both of whom the knight of Liddisdale had cruelly slain; but it appears, both from the

ballad, and the hints thrown out by Godscroft, that it was through jealousy of Liddisdale and his lady.

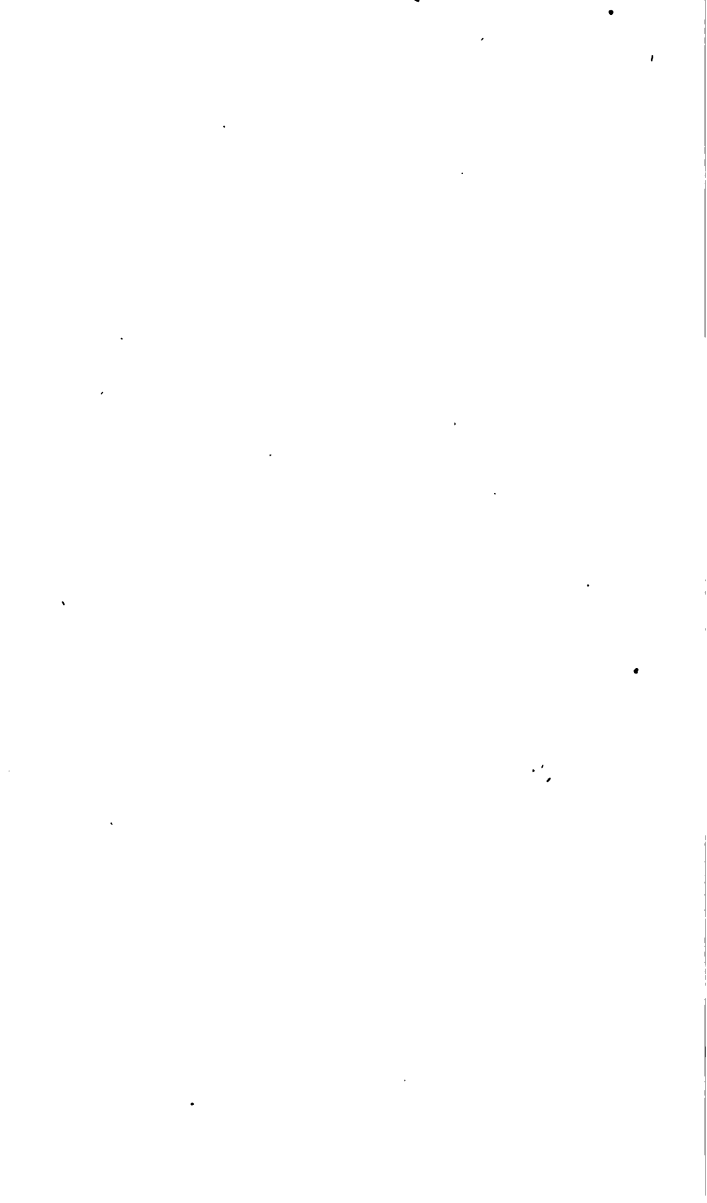
And mony a hosbande scho hathe slayne,

And evir and anon gotte newe.—v. 32.

This is so far true. The Earl of Douglas was her second husband, and shortly after this business with Liddisdale, he divorced her, although she had then born him a son and a daughter. Shortly after this divorce, she was again, by a third marriage, united to Thomas Douglas, third Earl of Angus, and on his death, by a fourth marriage, to Sir John Swinton; a success in noble conquests that few ladies of our day can boast.

If there be any truth at all in the story of her being wounded by her brother, it must have been by Thomas, the thirteenth Earl of Mar, as he was her only brother. He died childless, and this lady's son James, by the Earl of Douglas, succeeded to his estate and titles. This was the brave James Earl of Douglas and Mar, of whom so much legendary lore prevails, both in song and traditionary tale. He was knighted by his father, along with two of the king's sons, on a field of battle, which was fought on the lands of Abbotsford, in the year 1378, and in which old Douglas gained a signal and great success over the English, headed by Sir Thomas Musgrave; and after a life of warlike adventures, was slain at the battle of Otterburn,—*alias*, "The Huntynge of the Chevyote."

WILLIE WILKIN.



WILLIE WILKIN.

The real name of this famous warlock was Johnston ; how he came to acquire that of Wilkin I can get no information, though his name and his pranks are well known in Annandale and Nithsdale. He seems to have been an abridgment of Mr Michael Scott ; but though his powers were exhibited on a much narrower scale, they were productive of effects yet more malevolent.

THE glow-worm goggled on the moss,

When Wilkin rode away,

And much his aged mother feared,

But wist not what to say :

For near the change of every moon,

At deepest midnight tide,

He hied him to yon ancient fare,

That stands on Kinnel side.

His thoughts were absent, wild his looks,
His speeches fierce and few ;
But who he met, or what was done,
No mortal ever knew.

“ O stay at home, my only son,
O stay at home with me !
I fear I'm secretly forewarned
Of ills awaiting thee.

“ Last night I heard the dead-bell sound,
When all were fast asleep ;
And aye it rung, and aye it sung,
Till all my flesh did creep.

“ And when on slumber's silken couch,
My senses dormant lay,
I saw a pack of hungry hounds,
Would make of thee their prey.

“ With feeble step, I ran to help,
Or death with thee to share ;
When straight you bound my hands and feet,
And left me lying there.

“ I saw them tear thy vitals forth ;
Thy life blood dyed the way ;
I saw thy eyes all glaring red,
And closed mine for aye.

“ Then stay at home, my only son,
O stay at home with me !
Or take with thee this little book,
Thy guardian it shall be.”

“ Hence, old fanatic, from my sight !
What means this senseless whine ?
I pray thee, mind thine own affairs,
Let me attend to mine.”

“ Alas ! my son, the generous spark,
That warmed thy tender mind,
Is now extinct, and malice keen
Is only left behind.

“ How canst thou rend that aged heart,
That yearns thy woes to share ?
Thou still hast been my only grief,
My only hope and care.

“ Ere I had been one month a bride,
Of joy I took farewell ;
With Craigie on the banks of Sark,
Thy valiant father fell.

“ I nursed thee on my tender breast,
With meikle care and pain ;
And saw with pride thy mind expand,
Without one sordid stain.

“ With joy each night I saw thee kneel,
Before the throne of grace ;
And on thy Saviour’s blessed day,
Frequent his holy place.

“ But all is gone ! the vespers sweet,
Which from our castle rose,
Are silent now ; and sullen pride
In hand with envy goes !

“ Thy wedded wife has swayed thy heart
To pride and passion fell ;
O, for thy little children’s sake,
Renounce that path of hell.

“ Then stay at home, my only son,
O with thy mother stay !
Or tell me what thou goest about,
That for thee I may pray.”

He turned about, and hasted out,
And for his horse did call ;
“ An hundred fiends, my patience rend,
But thou excell’st them all !”

She slipt beneath his saddle lap
A book of psalms and prayer,
And hastened to yon ancient fane,
To listen what was there.

And when she came to yon kirk-yard,
Where graves are green and low,
She saw full thirty coal-black steeds,
All standing in a row.

Her Willie’s was the tallest steed,
’Twixt Dee and Annan whole ;
But placed beside that mighty rank,
He kythed but like a foal.

She laid her hand upon his side;
Her heart grew cold as stone!
The cold sweat ran from every hair,
He trembled every bone!

She laid her hand upon the next,
His bulky side to stroak,
And aye she reached, and aye she stretched,—
'Twas nothing all but smoke.

It was a mere delusive form,
Of films and sulph'ry wind;
And every wave she gave her hand,
A gap was left behind.

She passed through all those stately steeds,
Yet nothing marred her way,
And left her shape in every shade,
For all their proud array.

But whiles she felt a glowing heat,
 Though mutt'ring holy prayer ;
And' filmy veils assail'd her face,
 And stifling brimstone air.

Then for her darling desperate grown,
 Straight to the aisle she flew ;
But what she saw, and what she heard,
 No mortal ever knew.

But yells and moans, and heavy groans,
 And blackest blasphemye,
Did fast abound ; for every hound
 Of hell seemed there to be.

And after many a horrid rite,
 And sacrifice profane,
“ A book ! a book ! ” they loudly howled ;
 “ Our spells are all in vain.

“ Hu ! tear him, tear him limb from limb !”

Resounded through the pile ;

“ Hu ! tear him, tear him straight, for he

Has mocked us all this while !”

The tender matron, desperate grown,

. Then shrieked most bitterly ;

“ O spare my son, and take my life,

The book was lodged by me.”

“ Ha ! that’s my frantic mother’s voice !

My life or peace must end ;

O ! take her, body and soul bothe !

Take her, and spare thy friend !”

The riot rout then sallied out,

Like hounds upon their prey ;

And gathered round her in the aisle,

With many a hellish bray.

Each angry shade endeavours made,
Their fangs in blood to stain,
But all their efforts to be felt,
Were impotent and vain.

Whether the wretched mortal there
His filial hands embraced,
Or if the Ruler of the sky
The scene with pity viewed,—

And sent the streaming bolt of heaven,
Ordained to interpose,
To take her life, and save her soul
From these infernal foes,

No man can tell how it befel ;
Inquiry all was vain ;
But her blood was shed, for the swaird was red
But an' the kirk-door-stane.—

And Willie Wilkin's noble steed
Lay stiff upon the green.
A night so dire in Annandale,
Before had never been !

Loud thunders shook the vault of heaven,
The fire-flaughts flew amain ;
The graves were plowed, the rocks were riven,
Whole flocks and herds were slain.

They gathered up the mangled limbs,
And laid beneath the stone ;
But the heart, and the tongue, and every palm
From every hand, were gone.

Her blood was sprinkled on the wall,
Her body was on the floor ;
Her reverend head, with sorrows grey,
Hung on the chapel door.

To Auchincastle Wilkin hied,
On Evan banks sae green ;
And lived and died like other men,
For aught that could be seen.

But gloomy, gloomy was his look,
And froward was his way ;
And malice every action ruled,
Until his dying day.

And many a mermaid staid his call,
And many a mettled fay ;
And many a wayward spirit learned
His summons to obey.

And many a wondrous work he wrought,
And many things foretold ;
Much was he feared, but little loved,
By either young or old.

NOTES

TO

WILLIE WILKIN.

*He hied him to yon ancient fane,
That stands on Kinnel side.—v. 2.*

THE name of this ancient fane is Dumgree. It is beautifully situated on the west side of the Kinnel, one of the rivers which joins the Annan from the west, and is now in ruins. It is still frequented by a few peaceable spirits, at certain seasons. As an instance: Not many years ago, a neighbouring farmer, riding home at night upon a mare, who, besides knowing the road well enough, had her foal closed in at home, thought himself hard at his own house, but was surprised to find that his mare was stopped at the door of the old kirk of Dumgree. He mounted again, and essayed it a second, and a third time; but always when he thought himself at home, he found himself at the door of the old kirk of Dumgree, and farther from home than when he first set out. He was now sensible that

the beast was led by some invisible hand, so alighting, he went into the chapel and said his prayers ; after which he mounted, and rode as straight home as if it had been noon. If the farmer had told his story to my uncle Toby, he would certainly have whistled, *Lillabullero*.

To Auchincastle Wilkin hied,

On Evan banks see green.—v. 43.

Auchincastle is situated on the west side of the Evan, another of the tributary streams of the Annan. It seems to have been a place of great strength and antiquity ; is surrounded by a moat and a fosse ; and is perhaps surpassed by none in Scotland for magnitude.

And lived and died like other men,

For aught that could be seen.—v. 43.

If he lived and died like other men, it appears that he was not at all buried like other men. When on his death bed, he charged his sons, as they valued their peace and prosperity, to sing no requiem, nor say any burial-service over his body ; but to put a strong withie to each end of his coffin, by which they were to carry him away to Dumgree, and see that all the attendants were well-mounted. On the top of a certain eminence they were to set down the corpse and rest a few minutes, and if nothing interfered they might proceed. If they fulfilled these, he promised them the greatest happiness and prosperity for four generations ; but if they neglected them in one point, the utmost misery and wretchedness. The lads performed every thing according to their father's directions ; and they had

scarcely well set down the corpse on the place he mentioned, when they were alarmed by the most horrible bellowing of bulls ; and instantly two dreadful brindered ones appeared, roaring and snuffing, and tossing up the earth with their horns and hoofs ; on which the whole company turned and fled, When the bulls reached the coffin, they put each of them one of their horns in their respective withies, and ran off with the corpse, stretching their course straight to the westward. The relatives, and such as were well-mounted, pursued them, and kept nigh them for several miles ; but when they came to the small water of Brann, in Nithdale, the bulls went straight through the air, from the one hill head to the other, without descending to the bottom of the glen. This unexpected manœuvre threw the pursuers quite behind, though they needed not to have expected any thing else, having before observed, that their feet left no traces on the ground, though ever so soft. However, by dint of whip and spur, they again got sight of them ; but when they came to Loch Ettrick, on the heights of Closeburn, they had all lost sight of them but two, who were far behind : but the bulls there meeting with another company, plunged into the lake with the corpse, and were never more seen at that time. Ever since his spirit has haunted that loch, and continues to do so to this day.

He was when alive very fond of the game of curling on the ice, at which no mortal man could beat him ; nor has his passion for it ceased with death ; for he and his hellish confederates continue to amuse themselves with this game during the long winter nights, to the great terror and annoyance of the neighbourhood, not much regarding whether the loch be frozen or

not. I have heard sundry of the neighbouring inhabitants declare, with the most serious countenances, that they have heard them talking, and the sound of the stones, running along the ice and hitting each other, as distinctly as ever they did when present at a real and substantial curling. Some have heard him laughing, others lamenting ; and others have seen the two bulls plashing and swimming about in the loch at the close of the evening. In short, every one allows it to be a dangerous place, and a place where very many have been affrighted : though there is little doubt that, making allowances for the magnifying qualities of fear, all the above phenomena might be accounted for in a natural way.—Wilkin's descendants are still known ; and the poorer sort of them have often their great predecessor mentioned to them as a ground of reproach, whom they themselves allow to have been an *awesome body*.

THIRLESTANE.

A FRAGMENT.



THIRLESTANE.

A FRAGMENT.

SIR ROBERT SCOTT, knight of Thirlestane, was first married to a lady of high birth and qualifications, whom he most tenderly loved; but she, soon dying, left him an only son. He was afterwards married to a lady of a different temper, by whom he had several children; whose jealousy of the heir made Sir Robert doat still more on this darling son. She, knowing that the right of inheritance belonged to him, and that, of course, a very small share would fall to her sons, seeing he loved the heir so tenderly, grew every year more uneasy. But the building, and other preparations which were going on at Gamescleuch, on the other side of the Ettrick, for his accommodation on reaching his majority, when he was also to be married to a fair kinswoman, drove her past all patience, and made her resolve on his destruction. The masonry of his new castle of Gamescleuch was finished on his birth-day, when he reached his twentieth year; but it never went farther. This being always a feast-day at Thirlestane, the lady prepared, on that day, to put her hellish plot in execution; for which pur-

pose she had previously secured to her interest John Lally, the family piper. This man, tradition says, procured her three adders, of which they chose the parts replete with the most deadly poison ; these they ground to a fine powder, and mixed with a bottle of wine. On the forenoon before the festival commenced, he went over to Gamescleuch to regale his workmen, who had exerted themselves to get their work finished on that day, and Lally the piper went with him as a server. When his young lord called for wine to drink a health to the masons, John gave him a cup of the poisoned bottle, which he drank off. Lally went out of the castle, as if about to return home ; but that was the last sight of him. He could never be found nor heard of, though the most diligent and extended search was made for him. The heir swelled and burst almost instantaneously. A large company of the then potent name of Scott, with others, were now assembled at Thirlestane to grace the festival ; but what a woeful meeting it turned out to be ! They with one voice pronounced him poisoned ; but where to attach the blame remained a mystery, as he was so universally loved and esteemed. The first thing the knight caused to be done, was blowing the blast on the trumpet or great bugle, which was the warning for all the family instantly to assemble ; which they did in the court of the castle. He then put the following question : “ Now, are we all here ? ” A voice answered from the crowd, “ We are all here but Lally the piper.” Simple and natural as this answer may seem, it served as an electrical shock to old Sir Robert. It is supposed that, knowing the confidence which his lady placed in this menial, the whole scene of cruelty opened to his eyes at once ; and the trying conviction,

that his peace was destroyed by her most dear to him, struck so forcibly upon his feelings, that it totally deprived him of reason. He stood a long time speechless, and then fell to repeating the answer he had received, like one half awakened out of a sleep; nor was he ever heard, for many a day, to speak another word than these, "We're all here but Lally the piper:" and when any one accosted him, whatever was the subject, that was sure to be the answer he received.

The method which he took to revenge his son's death was singular and unwarrantable: He said, that the estate of right belonged to his son, and since he could not bestow it upon him living, he would spend it all upon him now he was dead; and that neither the lady, nor her children, should ever enjoy a farthing of that which she had played so foully for. The body was accordingly embalmed, and lay in great splendour at Thirlestane for a year and a day; during all which time Sir Robert kept open house, welcoming and feasting all who chose to come, and actually spent or mortgaged his whole estate, saving a very small patrimony in Eskdale-muir, which belonged to his wife. Some say, that while all the country, who chose to come, were thus feasting at Thirlestane, she remained shut up in a vault of the castle, and lived on bread and water.

During the three last days of this wonderful feast, the crowds which gathered were immense; it seemed as if the whole country were assembled at Thirlestane. The butts of wine were carried to the open fields, the ends knocked out of them with hatchets, stones, or whatever came readiest to hand, and the liquor carried about "in stoups and in caups." On these days the burn of Thirlestane ran constantly red with wine, and even

communicated its tincture to the River Ettrick. The family vault, where his corpse was interred in a leaden chest, is under the same roof with the present parish church of Ettrick, and distant from Thirlestane about a Scots mile. To give some idea of the magnitude of the burial, the old people tell us, that though the whole way was crowded with attendants, yet, when the leaders of the procession reached the church, the rearmost were not nearly got from Thirlestane.

Sir Robert, shortly after dying, left his family in a state little short of downright beggary, which, they say, the lady herself came to before she died. As Sir Robert's first lady was of the family of Buccleuch, some suspected him of having a share in forwarding the knight's desperate procedure. Certain it is, however, he did not, in this instance, depart from the old family maxim, "*Keep what you have, and catch what you can,*" but made a noble hand of the mania of grief, which so overpowered the faculties of the old baron; for when accounts came to be cleared up, a large proportion of the lands turned out to be Buccleuch's. And it is added, on what authority I know not, that when the extravagance of Sir William Scott obliged the Harden family to part with the Thirlestane property, which fell into their hands, the purchasers were bound by the bargain to refund these lands, should the Scotts of Thirlestane ever make good their right to them, either by law or redemption.

The nearest lineal descendant from this second marriage is one Robert Scott, a poor man who lives at the Binks on Teviot, whom the generous Buccleuch has taken notice of and provided for. He is commonly distinguished by the appellation of *Rob*

the Laird, from the conviction of what he would have been had he got fair play. With this man, who is very intelligent, I could never find an opportunity of conversing, though I sought it diligently. It is said, he can inform as to many particulars relating to this sad catastrophe; and that, whenever he has occasion to mention a certain great predecessor of his, (the Lady of Thirlestane,) he distinguishes her by a very uncouth epithet. It must be remarked, that I had access to no records for the purpose of ascertaining the facts above stated, though I believe they are, for the most part, pretty correct. Perhaps much might be learned by applying to the noble representative of the family, the Honourable Lord Napier, who is still possessed of the beautiful mountains round Thirlestane, and who has it at present in contemplation to rebuild and beautify it; which may God grant him health and prosperity to accomplish.—It is to this story that the following fragment alludes.

It is not a little singular, that in the Napier genealogy, published in Wood's Peerage, from a manuscript contained in Lord Napier's charter-chest, there is no mention made of this catastrophe; nor is it possible from that genealogy to ascertain who the heir that was thus taken off has been. Yet there is so little doubt of the traditionary story having been true, that it was the foundation of a law-suit, which lasted for generations, regarding a part of the lands that belonged either to Sir Robert's second lady, or were hers in reversion. The Sir Robert Scott of Thirlestane, who was warden-depute of the West Border in 1567, and who married Margaret, daughter of Sir Walter Scott, had in fact three sons, and in this chronicle no second lady is mentioned. But on the other hand, his eldest son and

heir, Robert, is merely mentioned ; and it is evident that he had died young, and without issue. From this it is highly probable, that he was the heir who was supposed to have been poisoned ; for it farther appears, that some remnants of the estate fell to his brother William, and to his children ; but from that time forth they are no more styled Scotts of Thirlestane, until 1666, when one Francis Scott was created a Baronet by patent, and designed of Thirlestane, in the county of Selkirk. He was the eldest son of Patrick Scott of Tanlawhill, commonly called Pate the Laird, and great-grandson to the last Sir Robert Scott by Walter his third son. There is therefore, apparently some confusion in the manuscript about this period, which is manifestly very short and imperfect ; a circumstance which would naturally enough occur in the embarrassed state of the family. Pate the Laird recovered a mere fragment of the ample estate of Thirlestane, by purchasing the wadsets of a few of the best of the farms around the castle. When Sir Robert was appointed keeper of the West Marches under his father-in-law, he could have mounted his horse at Eltrive Lake, and ridden to the Crurie, near Langholm, on his own lands, a distance of 30 miles. The Honourable Captain William Napier has built a splendid mansion at the old family seat, and beautified the country by many improvements. Why does he not resume the old paternal name ?

THIRLESTANE.

A FRAGMENT.

FER, fer hee raide, and fer hee gaed,
And aft hee sailit the sea ;
And thrise he crossit the Alpyne hyllis
To dystante Italye.

Beyonde Lough-Nesse hys tempil stude,
Ane celle of meikle fame ;
A knichte of guid Sainte John hee wals,
And Baldwyn wals hys name.

By wondrous lore hee coulde explore,
 Whatte after tymes wald be ;
And manie mystic lynks of fate,
 He hafflyns could foresee.

Fer, fer he raide, and fer hee gaed,
 Owre mony hyll and daill,
Tyll passynge through the fayre Foreste,
 Hee learnit ane waesome tale.

Whare Ettricke wandrys downe ane playne,
 Withe lofty hyllis belayit,
The staitly toweris of Thirlestane
 Withe wondyr hee surveyit.

Black hung the bannyr onne the walle ;
 The trumpit seemit to grane ;
And reid, reid ranne the bonnye burne,
 Whilke erste lyke syller shaene.

Atte first ane noyse, lyke fairie soundis,
Hee indistinctly hearde ;
Then countlesse, countlesse were the croudis
Whilke rounde the wallis appearit.

Thousandis of steidis stude onne the hyll,
Of sable trappyngis vayne ;
And rounde onne Ettrickis baittle haughis
Grewe no kin kynde of grayne.

Hee gazit, hee wonderit, sair hee fearit
Some recente tragedye ;
Atte lengthe hee spyit ane woeful wichte,
Gaun droopynge owre the ley.

Hys bearde wals sylverit owre withe eild ;
Pale wals hys cheike wae-worne ;
Hys hayre wals lyke the muirlande wylde
Onne a Decembyr morne.

“ Haile, reverente brother !” Baldwyn saide,

“ Here in this unco lande,

Ane Temple warrioure greetis thee well,

And offers thee hys hande.

“ O telle mee why the people mourne ?

Sure all is notte forre guid ;

And why, why does the bonnye burne

Rin reid withe Chrystain bluid ?”

Aulde Beattie turnit and shuke hys heide,

While downe felle mony a teire ;

“ O, wellcome, wellcome, sire,” hee saide,

“ Ane wacsome tale to heire :

“ The guid Syr Robertis sonne and heir

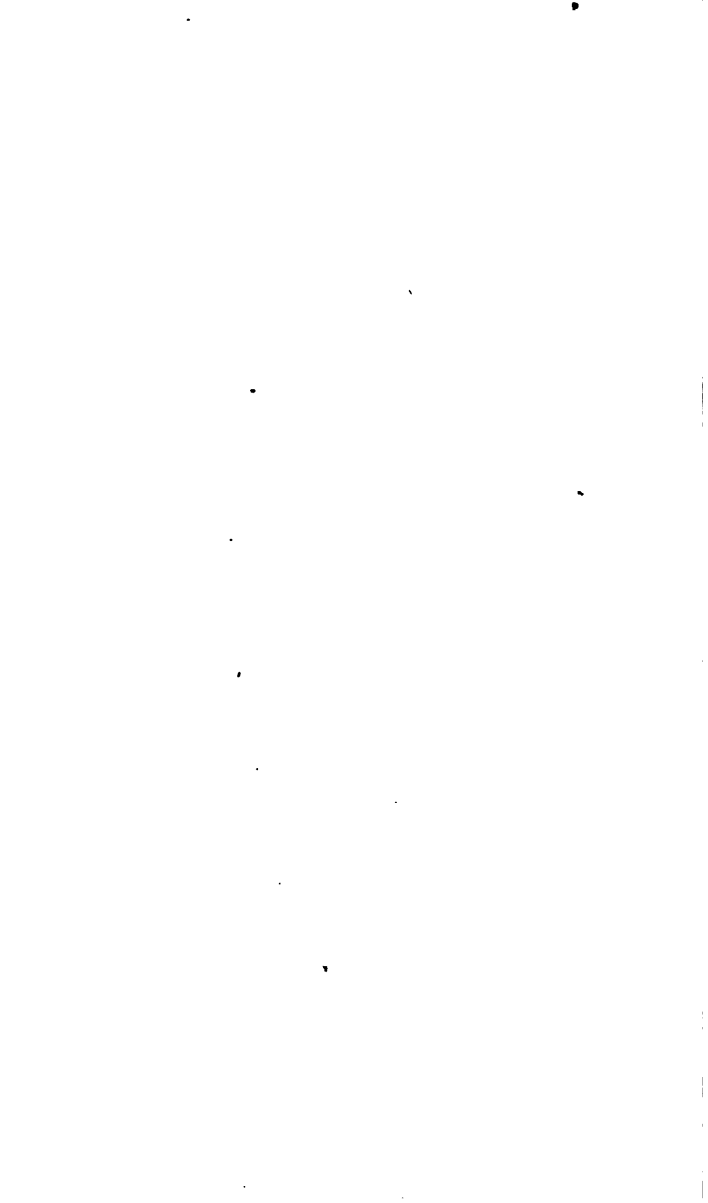
By cruelle handis lyis slayne,

And all hys wyde domaynis so fayre

To ither Lordis are gane.

LORD DERWENT.

A FRAGMENT.



LORD DERWENT.

A FRAGMENT.

“ O WHY look ye so pale, my lord ?

And why look ye so wan ?

And why stand mounted at your gate

So early in the dawn ?”

“ O well may I look pale, ladye ;

For how can I look gay,

When I have fought the live-long night,

And fled at break of day ?”

P

“ And is the Border troop arrived ?
And have they won the day ?
It must have been a bloody field,
Ere Derwent fled away.

“ But where got ye that stately steed,
So stable and so good ?
And where got ye that gilded sword,
So dyed with purple blood ?”

“ I got that sword in bloody fray,
Last night on Eden downe ;
I got the horse and harness too,
Where mortal ne’er got one.”

“ Alight, alight, my noble lord ;
God mot you save and see !
For never till this hour was I,
Afraid to look on thee.”

He turned him to the glowing east,

That stained both tower and tree :

“ Prepare, prepare, my lady fair,

Prepare to go with me.

“ Before this dawning day shall close,

A deed shall here be done,

That men unborn shall shrink to hear,

And dames the tale shall shun.

“ The morning blushes to the chin,

The foul intent to see.

Prepare, prepare, my lady fair,

Prepare to follow me.

“ Alight, alight, my noble lord,

I'll live or die with thee ;

I see a wound deep in your side,

And hence you cannot flee.”

She looked out o'er her left shoulder
To list a heavy groan ;
But when she turned her round again,
Her noble lord was gone.

She looked to East, and West, and South,
And all around the tower ;
Through house and hall ; but man nor horse
She never could see more.

She turned her round and round about,
All in a doleful state ;
And there she saw her little foot-page
Alighting at the gate.

“ Oh ! open, open, noble dame,
And let your servant in ;
Our furious foes are hard at hand,
The castle fair to win.”

“ But tell me, Billy, where’s my lord ?
Or whither is he bound ?
He’s gone just now, and in his side
A deep and deadly wound.”

“ Why do you rave, my noble dame,
And look so wild on me ?
Your lord lies on the bloody field,
And him you’ll never see.

“ With Scottish Jardine, hand to hand,
He fought most valiantlye,
Put him to flight, and broke his men,
With shouts of victory.

“ But Maxwell, rallying, wheeled about,
And charged us fierce as hell ;
Yet ne’er could pierce the English troops
Till my brave master fell.

“ Then all was gone ; the ruffian Scot
Bore down our flying band ;
And now they waste with fire and sword
The Links of Cumberland.

“ Lord Maxwell’s gone to Carlisle town
With Jardine hastilye,
And young Kilpatrick, and Glencairn
Are come in search of thee.”

“ How dare you lie, my little page,
Whom I pay meat and fee ?
The cock has never crowed but once
Since Derwent was with me.

“ The bird that sits on yonder bush,
And sings so loud and clear,
Has only three times changed his note
Since my good lord was here.”

“ Whoe’er it was, whate’er it was,
I’m sure it was not he ;
I saw him dead on Eden plain,
I saw him with my ee.

“ I saw him stand against an host,
While heaps before him fell ;
I saw them pierce his manly side,
And bring the last farewell.

“ ‘ O run,’ he cried, ‘ to my ladye,
And bear the fray before ;
Tell her I died for England’s right.’—
“ Then word spake never more.

“ Come let us fly to Westmoreland,
For here you cannot stay ;
Short be thy shrift ; our steeds are swift,
And well I know the way.”

I will not fly, I cannot fly ;
My heart is wonder sore ;
My brain it turns, my blood it burns,
And I dare not look before."

She turned her eye to Borrowdale ;
Her heart grew chill with dread ;—
For there she saw the Scottish bands,
Kilpatrick at their head.

Red blazed the beacon of Pownell,
On Skiddaw there were three ;
The warder's horn o'er muir and fell
Was heard continually.

Dark grew the sky, the wind was still,
The sun in blood arose ;
But oh ! how many a gallant man
Ne'er saw that evening close !

* * * * *

NOTES

TO

LORD DERWENT.

I got that sword in bloody fray,

Last night on Eden downe—v. 5.

THIS ballad relates to an engagement which took place betwixt the Scots and English, in Cumberland, A. D. 1524; for a particular account of which, see the historians of that period.

But Maxwell, rallying, wheeled about.—v. 18.

The page's account of this action seems not to be wide of the truth: "On the 17th of Julie, the Lord Maxwell, and Sir Alexander Jardein, with diverse other Scottishmen, in great numbers entered England by the west marches, and Caerleill, with displayed banners, and began to harrie the country, and burn diverse places. The Englishmen assembled on every side, so that they were far more in number than the Scottish-

men, and thereupon set feircelie upon their enemies ; insomuch, that, for the space of an hour, there was a sore fight continued betwixt them. But the Lord Maxwell, like a true politike Captain, as of all that knew him he was no less reputed, ceased not to encourage his people ; and after that, by the taking of Sir Alexander Jardein and others, they had beene put backe, he brought them in arraie again, and, beginning a new skirmish, recovered in manner all the prisoners ; took and slew diverse Englishmen ; so that he returned with victorie, and led above 300 prisoners with him into Scotland." *Hollingshed.*

THE LAIRD OF LAIRISTAN,

OR THE

THREE CHAMPIONS OF LIDDISDALE.

THE LAIRD OF LAIRISTAN,

OR THE

THREE CHAMPIONS OF LIDDISDALE.

THE scene of this ballad is laid in the upper parts of Liddisdale, in which district the several residences of the three champions are situated, as is also the old castle of Hermitage, with the farm-houses of Saughentree and Roughley.

As to the authenticity of the story, all that I can say of it is, that I used to hear it told, when I was a boy, by William Scott, a joiner of that country, and was much taken with some of the circumstances. Were I to relate it verbatim, it would only be anticipating a great share of the poem.—One verse is ancient, beginning, O wae be to thee, &c.

“ O DICKIE, ’tis light, and the moon shines bright,

Will ye gang and watch the deer wi’ me ?”

“ Ay, by my sooth, at the turn o’ the night,

We’ll drive the holm of the Saughentree.

The moon' had turned the roof of Heaven ;
The ground lay deep in drifted snaw ;
The Hermitage bell had rung eleven,
And our yeomen watched behind the ha !

The deer was skight, and the snaw was light,
And never a blood-drap could they draw,
“ Now by my sooth,” cried Dickie then,
“ There's something yonder will fear us a'.

“ Right owre the know where Liddel lies,—
Nae wonder that it derkens my ee,
See yonder's a thing of fearsome size,
And it's moving this way hastilye.

“ Say, what is yon, my brother John?
The Lord preserve baith you and me !
But our hearts are the same, and sure our aim,
And he that comes near these bullets shall prie.”

“ O haud your tongue, my brother dear,
Let us survey’t wi’ steady ee ;
’Tis a dead man they are carrying here,
And ’tis fit that the family warned should be.”

They ran to the ha’, and they wakened them a’,
But none were at home but maidens three ;
Then close in the shade of the wall they staid,
To watch what the issue of this would be.

And there they saw a dismal sight,
A sight had nearly freezed their blood ;
One lost her sight in the fair moon-light,
And one of them fainted where they stood.

Four stalwart men, on arms so bright,
Came bearing a corpse with many a wound ;
His habit bespoke him a lord or knight ;
And his fair ringlets swept the ground.

They heard one to another say—

“ A place to leave him will not be found ;
The door is locked, and the key away,
In the byre will we lay him down.”

Then into the byre the corpse they bore,
And away they fled right speedilye ;
The rest took shelter behind the door,
In wild amazement as well might be.

And into the byre no ane durst gang,
No, not for the life of his bodye ;
But the blood on the snaw was trailed alang,
And they kend a' wasna as it should be.

Next morning all the dalesmen ran ;
For soon the word was far and wide ;
And there lay the Laird of Lairistan,
The bravest knight on the Border side !

He was wounded behind, and wounded before,
And cloven through the left cheek-bone;
And clad in the habit he daily wore;
But his sword, and his belt, and his bonnet were gone.

Then East and West the word has gane,
And soon to Braxholm ha' it flew,
That Elliot of Lairistan he was slain,
And how or why no living knew.

Buccleuch has mounted his milk-white steed,
With fifty knights in his company;
To Hermitage castle they rode with speed,
Where all the dale was summoned to be.

And soon they came, a numerous host,
And they swore and touched the fair bodye;
But Jocky o' Millburn he was lost,
And could not be found in the hale countrie.

“ Now wae be to thee, Armstrong o’ Millburn !

And O an ill death may’st thou dee !

Thou hast put down brave Lairistan,

But his equal thou wilt never be.

“ The Bewcastle men may ramp and rave,

And drive away the Liddisdale kye :

For now is our guardian laid in his grave,

And Branxholm and Thirlestane distant lye.”

The dalesmen thus his loss deplore,

And every one his virtues tell :

His hounds lay howling at the door,

His hawks flew idle o’er the fell.

When three long years were come and gone,

Two shepherds sat on Roughley hill ;

And aye they sighed and made their moan,

O’er the present times that looked so ill.

“ Our young king lives at London town,
Buccleuch must bear him companie ;
And Thirlestane’s all to flinders gone,
And who shall our protector be ?

“ And jealous of the Stuart race,
The English lords begin to thraw ;
The land is in a piteous case,
When subjects rise against the law.

“ Our grief and ruin are forespoke,
The nation has received a stain—
A stain like that on Sundup’s cloak,
That never will wash out again.”

Amazement kythed in the shepherd’s face,
His mouth to open wide began ;
He stared and looked from place to place,
As things across his mem’ry ran.

The broidered cloak of gaudy green,
Which Sundup wore, and was sae gay,
For three lang years had ne'er been seen,
At chapel, raid, nor holiday.

Once on a night he overheard,
From two old dames of southron land,
A tale the which he greatly feared,
But ne'er could th'roughly understand.

“ Now tell me, neighbour, tell me true ;
Your sim'lie bodes us little good ;
I fear the cloak you mentioned now,—
I fear 'tis stained with noble blood !”

“ Indeed, my friend, you've guessed aright ;
I never meant to tell to man
That tale ; but crimes will come to light,
Let human wits do what they can.

“ But He, who ruleth wise and well,
Hath ordered from his seat on high,
That aye since valiant Elliot fell,
That mantle bears the purple dye.

“ And all the waters in Liddisdale,
And all that lash the British shore,
Can ne’er wash out the wondrous maele !
It still seems fresh with purple gore.”

Then east and west the word is gane,
And soon to Branxholm ha’ it flew ;
And Halbert o’ Sundup he was ta’en,
And brought before the proud Buccleuch.

The cloak was hung in open hall,
Where ladies and lords of high degree,
And many a one, both great and small,
Were struck with awe the same to see.

" New tell me Sundup," said Buccleuch,
 " Is this the judgment of God on high ?
 If that be Elliot's blood we view,
 False Sundup ! thou shalt surely die ! "

Then Halbert turned him where he stood,
 And wiped the round tear frae his e'e ;
 " That blood, my lord, is Elliot's blood ;
 I winna keep in the truth frae thee."

" O ever-alack ! " said good Buccleuch,
 " If that be true thou tell'st to me,
 On the highest tree in Branhholm-heuch,
 Stout Sundup, thou must hangit be."

" 'Tis Elliot's blood, my lord, 'tis true ;
 And Elliot's death was wrought by me ;
 And were the deed again to do,
 I'd do't in spite of hell and thee.

“ My sister, brave Jock Armstrong’s bride,
The fairest flower of Liddisdale,
By Lairistan foully was betrayed,
And roundly has he payed the mail.

“ We watched him in her secret bower,
And found her to his bosom prest :
He begged to have his broad claymore,
And dared us both to do our best.

“ Perhaps, my lord, ye’ll truly say,
In rage from laws of arms we swerved :
Though Lairistan got double play,
’Twas fairer play than he deserved.

“ We might have killed him in the dark,
When in the lady’s arms lay he ;
We might have killed him in his sark,
Yet gave him room to fight or flee.

“ ‘ Come on then,’ gallant Millburn cried,
‘ My single arm shall do the deed ;
Or heavenly justice is denied,
Or that false heart of thine shall bleed.’

“ Then to’t they fell, both sharp and snell,
With steady hand and watchful een,
From both the trickling blood-drops fell,
And the words of death were said between.

“ The first stroke Millburn to him gave,
He ript his bosom to the bone ;
Though Armstrong was a yeoman brave,
Like Elliot living there was none.

“ His growth was like the border oak ;
His strength the bison’s strength outvied ;
His courage like the mountain rock ;
For skill his man he never tried.

“ Oft had we three in border fray,
Made chiefs and armies stand in awe ;
And little weened to see the day
On other deadly thus to draw.”

The first wound that brave Millburn got,
The tear of rage rowed in his e’e ;
The next stroke that brave Millburn got,
The blood ran dreeping to his knee.

“ My sword I gripped into my hand,
And fast to his assistance ran ;—
What could I do ? I could not stand
And see the base deceiver win.”

‘ Now turn,’ I cried, ‘ thou limmer loun !
Turn round and change a blow with me,
Or by the righteous Powers aboon,
I’ll hew the arm from thy bodye.’

“ He turned with many a haughty word,
And lounged and passed most furiously ;
But, with one slap of my broad sword,
I brought the traitor to his knee.

‘ Now take thou that,’ stout Armstrong cried,
‘ For all the pain thou’st g’iven to me ;’
(Though then he shortly would have died)
And ran him through the fair bodye.”

Buccleuch’s stern look began to change,
To tine a warrior lothe was he ;
The crime was called a brave revenge,
And Halbert of Sundup was set free.

Then every man for Millburn mourned,
And wished him to enjoy his own ;
But Millburn never more returned,
Till ten long years were come and gone.

Then loud alarms through England ring,
And deeds of death and dool began ;
The commons rose against the king,
And friends to diff'rent parties ran.

The nobles join the royal train,
And soon his ranks with grandeur fill ;
They sought their foes with might and main,
And found them lying on Edgehill.

The trumpets blew, the bullets flew,
And long and bloody was the fray ;
At length, o'erpowered, the rebel crew
Before the royal troops gave way.

“ Who was the man,” Lord Lindsey cried,
“ That fought so well through all the fray ?
Whose coat of rags, together tied,
Seems to have seen a better day.

“ Such bravery in so poor array,
I never in my life did see ;
His valour three times turned the day,
When we were on the point to flee.”

Then up there spoke a man of note,
Who stood beside his majesty,
“ My liege, the man’s a Border Scot,
Who volunteered to fight for thee.

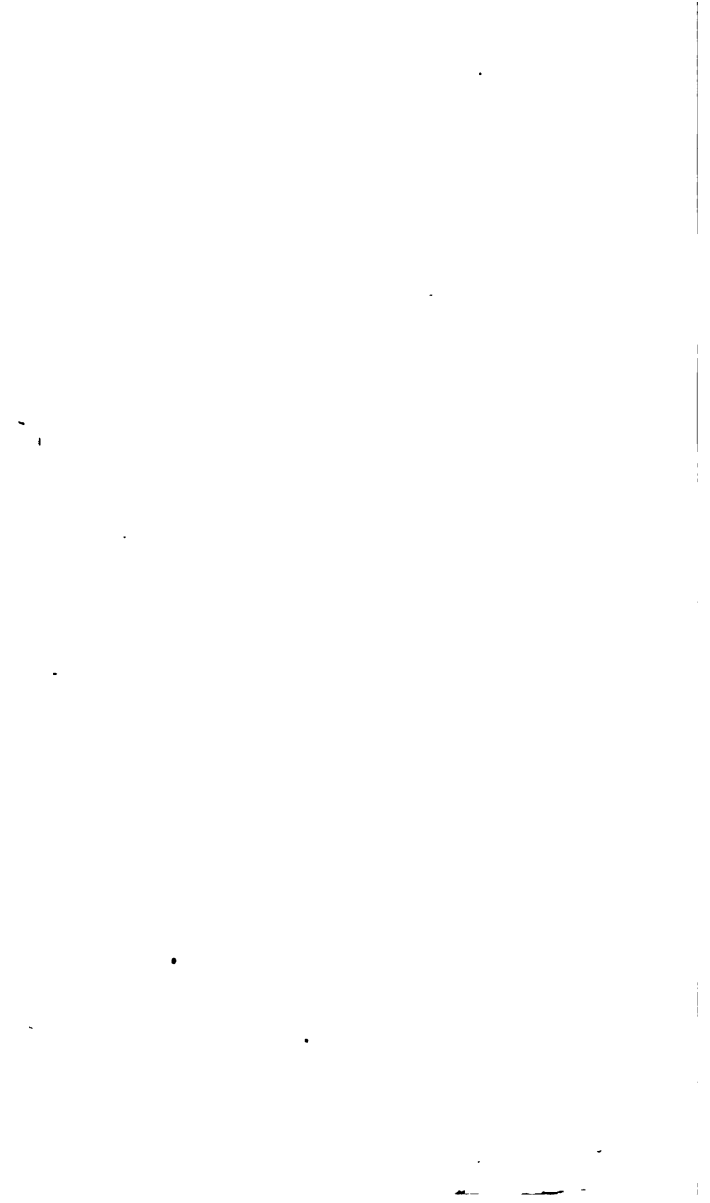
“ He says you’re kind, but counselled ill,
And sit unstable on your throne ;
But had he power unto his will,
He swears he’d kill the dogs each one.”

The king he smiled, and said aloud,
“ Go bring the valiant Scot to me ;
When we have all our foes subdued,
The lord of Liddel he shall be.”

**The king gave him his gay gold ring,
And made him there a belted knight.
But Millburn bled to save his king,
The king to save his royal right.**



THE WIFE OF CROWLE.



THE
WIFE OF CROWLE.

This fragment is a traditional story put to rhyme without any addition. The woman lived at Crowle Chapel in Nithsdale. It is now given more at large in "The Winter Evening Tales."

AND aye she sat by the cheek of the grate,
Pretending to shape and to sew ;
But she looked at all that entered the hall,
As if she would look them through.

Her hands she wrung, and at times she sung
Some wild airs for the dead ;
Then 'gan to tell a crazy tale,
She told it for a meed,

“ I once had a son, but now he is gone,
They tore my son from me,
His life-blood streamed where the cormorants screamed,
On the wild rocks girt by the sea.

“ So hard his lone bed, and unpillowed his head,
For the dark sea cave is his urn ;
The cliff-flowers weep o’er his slumbers so deep,
And the dead lights over him burn.

“ Say what can restore the form that’s no more,
Or illumine the death-set eye ?
Yes, a wild mother’s tears, and a wild mother’s prayers,
A spirit may force from the sky,

“ When the sun had rose high, and the season gone bye,
My yearnings continued the same ;
I prayed to Heaven, both morning and even,
To send me my son, till he came.

“ One evening late, by the chimney I sat,
I dreamed of the times that were gone,
Of its chirrup so eiry, the cricket was weary,
All silent I sat, and alone.

“ The fire burnt bright, and I saw by the light,
My own son enter the hall ;
A white birchen wand he held in his hand,
But no shadow had he on the wall.

“ He looked at the flame, as forward he came,
All steadfast and looked not away ;
His motion was still as the mist on the hill,
And his colour like cold white clay.

“ I knew him full well ; but the tones of the bell,
Which quavered as midnight it rung,
So stunned me I strove, but I could not move
My hand, my foot, nor my tongue.

“ Blood drops in a shower, then fell on the floor,
From the roof, and they fell upon me ;
No water their stain could wash out again ;
These blood-drops still you may see.

“ His form still grew, and the flame burnt blue,
I stretched out my arms to embrace ;
But he turned his dead eye, so hollow and dry,
And so wistfully gazed in my face,

“ That my head whirled round, the walls and the ground
All darkened, no more could I see ;
But each finger's point, and each finger's joint,
Grew thick as the joint of my knee.

“ I wakened ere day, but my son was away,
No word to me he had said ;
Though my blood was boiling, and my heart recoiling,
To see him again still I prayed.

“ And oft has he come to my lonely home,
In guise that might adamant melt ;
He has offered his hand, with expression so bland,
But that hand could never be felt.

“ I’ve oft seen him glide so close by my side,
On his grave-cloth the seams I could trace ;
The blood from a wound trickled down to the ground,
And a napkin was over his face.

“ So oft have I seen that death-like mien,
It has somewhat bewildered my brain ;
Yet, though chilled with affright at the terrible sight,
I long still to see it again.”



THE

LAIRDE OF KIRKMABREEKE.



THE

LAIRDE OF KIRKMABREEKE.

THIS Ballad was never before published ; but is now added as an original in that style of composition. The original of the hero will easily be recognised by a number of persons yet living ; and they must acknowledge, that, save in the change of title, and the county and place of his residence, there is no great exaggeration of circumstances in his eventful history.

SOME syngethe of mightye conqueroris,
And of grit sovrans loveth to speike,
But I do synge of ane wondrous manne,
Sometime callit the Lairde of Kirkmabreeke.

And och ! he wals ane verie grit manne,
Though manie mishanteris him befelle ;
But I moste withe his breedynge begynne,
Als I haif hearit the noorice telle.

His ladye modir sho waxit so rounde,
 Sho scarcelye dochte steppe before her shynniss;
 And the dropit Lairde he tremblit sore,
 For the gossipis saide there walde be twynniss.

But alle their laire wals turnit to laite,
 And they war forcit their gabbis to steike;
 For quhen the daye of the kimmeris came,
 There wals none but the heire of Kirkmabreeke.

He wals als braif and gallante ane boye,
 Als one in ane someris daye mochte se,
 For he strokke the meedwyfe on the eye,
 And he byte his modir abone the kne.

They colde not laye him til ane breste,
 For his teethe he wals not lothe to plye;
 But they brochte him up withe the pan and spoone,
 And in ane grit cradyl did him tye.

The noorice sho durst not his armis truste
To wampish about at will in playe,
But sho strappit him down with teape and corde,
And wals glad that sho wanne so awaye.

He toke his meite, and he toke his drynke,
So that in his cradyl there provit ane leake,
Als constant als ane goode spring walle ;
It wals bad for the heire of Kirkmabreeke.

And there the braif boye he did lye,
I wot he had but sorrye cheire,
But he sente furthe his voyce so valiantlye,
He made the deifest in the house to heire.

And then the Lairde walde fret and fume,
And he walde sweare by bloode and 'oondis,
The boye walde be a prezenter of saumis,
Or else a sairjen of blue dragoonis.

And the womyne callit him ane rowtyng bulle,
And paikit and skelpit him fulle sore,
Which the chylde resented manfullye,
And he shouted louder than before.

For he saw that he wals bounde and cuffit,
And ane slaif to womynis tyrannye,
And he wishit to haif the wingis of ane dove,
That he out of their reiche mochte flee.

But manie a blowe he wonne their chaftis,
And he walde byte them to the bone ;
And he pullit the hayre from out their heidis,
For he helde them in detestatioun.

They clad him in barrie-coat and frocke,
But the chylde he did them sore despise ;
They were so lyke womyne he threw them off,
And strampit forth in his nakyd thies.

He neiste gatte trewse and polonese,
 And they were tange and tichte indeide ;
 But the buttonis walde not louse for haiste,
 And all wente wronge without remeide.

Then to his fadir he straighte did go,
 And saide his caise, and sorely cryit ;
 " How has this hap'd, my boye ?" saide he,
 " It wals the womyne," the chylde replyit.

" Well," saide the Lairde, " I knowe them baisse
 Malyscious quenis, and rue it sore,
 But this revenge it is so vylde,
 I never knewe the lyke before."

The ladye bade the chylde go reide,
 The ladye bade the chylde go praye ;
 But he knewe it wals through malyse alle,
 And bounde him to the fieldis awaye.

And he walde playe withe beggarlye boyis,
And learne to do smalle deidis of synne ;
But he nevellit the wenchis with his neifis,
Tille they were blithe to run yollynge in.

They sente him to church, but he walde not praye,
They sente him to schole, but he walde not reide ;
For it wals ane womyne that sojournit there,
And there was nothyng but deadlye feide.

But the Lairde he toke ane rychte sore payne,
And he monit, and into sicknesse felle,
And he dyit, and they laide him in his graif ;
And our yonge wychte wals lairde himselle ;

And that he made the womyne to knowe,
For he turnit them forthe withoutten staye ;
And he bade them poussie their fortunis bothe,
The better aye the farther away.

“ Och !” said his modir, “ I did you beire,
 Withe payne myne herte wals lyke to breake,
 And I brochte you up withe dule and payne.”—
 “ Faythe, that thou didst !” saide Kirkmabreeke.

“ It is fullle harde,” saide sho, “ I trow,
 To turne me forthe my levyng to seike ;
 Och ! that I euir had sonne lyke you !”
 “ Trye get ane better,” saide Kirkmabreeke.

The noorice sho spake ryghte furiouslye—
 “ Thou vylde rascallioune of ane hounde !
 Thou art wors than the beastis that peryshe quite,
 That die and rotte upon the grounde.

“ They haif no soulis for to be safit,
 And they followe their perverse naturis alle ;
 The lyone rorethe furthe abroad,
 And holde the harmlesse bestis in thralle.

“ The wolfe he ravenethe in the nyghte,
 And bytethe the flockis into the folde,
 Until his verie eeris drappe bloode,
 And his eyebrees are dreidful to beholde.

“ The foxe he cumethe withe secret steppe,
 So softlye he no dreddour breidis,
 And he seizethe the chickenis in their sleipe,
 And snappethe off their harmlesse heidis.

“ The foulmarte takethe up the teste,
 And seizethe the lambkyn by the noz,
 And in the wullcattis bearded gobe
 The geslyng to the mountainis goes.

“ The corbye crowe he byggethe his este
 Upon the scrogge within the steipe,
 And, for to feide his gorbelynge yonge,
 He pykethe the eyne out of the sheipe.

“ But none of these wille lifte ane clawe,
 Or turne ane nebbe or angrye cruppe
 Against the moderis that did them beire,
 Or the kyndlye bestis that brochte them uppe.

“ And quhen their reavenynge dayis are done,
 They haif no fearis of byrnynge helle ;
 But thou shalt suffer in thy bodye
 Mayre than ane womynis tung canne telle.

“ There standis the bouke that did you breide,
 And brochte you furthe in manlye maike ;
 And here are the armis that bore you uppe !”
 “ And tyit me doune,” said Kirkmabreeke.

“ But go thou forthe, my worthye dame,
 I haif had enough of clacke and thee ;
 And for the lessoun that thou hast given,
 I wille thee paye moste bounteouslye.”

Quhen the goode noorice sho hearit of this,
 Sho firplit and dychtit her goode greye ee',
 And saide, " thou art a bounteous chylde,
 I haif saide it, and wille saye it of thee !"

He toke her by the boutte of the arme,
 And twynnit her lyke yarnwindles rounde ;
 And aye he gae her the tother yerke,
 And hethwackitherup, and hethwackit her downe.

And the noorice sho screemit, and yellit outrichte,
 But aye he throoshe, and mockit her dynne,
 And swore before he walde let her gang,
 He walde dadd the bonis out of her skynne.

Then sho felle sachlesse to the grounde,
 Sickan sporte the Lairde did neur see,
 And he saide " I haif repayde thee parte,
 That is the bountithe I gif to thee."

Then to his ladye modir he wente,
 And faste he seizit her nothyng lothe,
 Quod he, " the tymis are turnit with you,
 Faythe ! I shalle haife a strum at bothe !"

He gaif her ane skelpe upon the cheike,
 That made the bloode sterte to her ee,
 And her hayre, that erst had turnit greye,
 Arounde his knucklis ytwynit he.

" By the faythe of my bodye!" then saide the Lairde,
 " But I shalle haif ane mendis of you,
 And knevel your ould malysious bonis,
 Untyll you be alle bothe black and blewe.

" Haife mercye on me, myne deire sonne,
 And ceisse your strokkis before I die !"
 But he wals so braif and gallante ane manne,
 He walde not ceisse quhile sho could crye.

The noorice sho openit forthe her tung,
 And chryste ! as sho did him miscalle !
 But he gaif her ane kicke where he sholde not,
 And then stoode laughynge lyke to falle.

“ Now go thy wayis myne worthye demis,
 To scamper off I wille make you fainne ;
 An I sholde finde you heire the morne,
 I will gif you twyce as moche againne.”

Then the Lairde he wendethe to his manne Jocke,
 And saith, “ Quhat womyne are in my halle ?”
 “ Maister,” quod he, “ there be nine or tenne,
 Full tichte and lustye maydenis alle.”

“ Then Jocke, my manne, get thou ane rung,
 And see that it be styffe and straung,
 By the faythe of my bodye, we will them take,
 And beatte them quhile our armis dow bang.”

“ Goode lorde ! my maister !” Then quod Jocke,

“ Withoutten womyne we shalle not thryve ;

I neuir strokke ane womynis skynne,

Nor neuir shall quhile I’m alyve.”

“ Thou littil wottethe, myne own manne Jocke,

Quhat powerfolle diversioun it shall be ;

I lofe to belte ane womynis hyde

Abofe alle sportis I euir did se.”

“ I thochte not of it, myne deire maistere,

Bote that it wals ane deadlye synne,

Nowe do I longe moste eidentlye

With you the sporte for to begynne.

“ I staike to stryke withe sturdynesse,

And breake their bonis als well as thee ;

Only to maike revenge more sweite,

Take thou ane lessoun first by me.”

Then they gatte them twa buirdlye kentis,
 And they gatte them ane seimlye halle,
 And Jocke wente forthe unto the grene,
 And walit the prettyeste of them alle.

And he brochte them bothe into the roome,
 To gette them bastit bone and skynne ;
 And the Lairde he wette his lufis for worke,
 And seizit his kente for to begynne.

“ Caste aff,” said he, “ thyne boddycce brente,
 And buskit stayis, and beltis so braw ;
 For I longe to se the longe blewe strippis,
 And I longe to se the reide bloode fa’.”

Then Jocke he saide, “ my maister deire,
 Soche presciouse sporte it can nochte be,
 But als in promise so in pryce,
 Take thou ane lessoun first by me.

Then Jocke toke one upon his kne,
 And kyssit her lippis, and kyssit her cheike,
 And he claspit her kindly rounde the waiste,
 “ Quhat goode is in that ?” quod Kirkmabreeke.

“ I praye that we may knolle them first,
 And se them sprawle, and heire them squeake;
 Then syn it meiste we will kresse them neiste
 To pleisse them againne,” saide Kirkmabreeke.

But Jocke he wals ane stowborn wychte,
 And he walde haif the waie he chose,
 And the maydene that felle for the Lairde
 Sho wals als flushe als anie rose.

Then since no better mochte be done,
 The Lairde he toke her on his kne,
 And he put his handis arounde her middis,
 And lookit into her derke blue ee’,

And then he kyssit her lippis full lothe,

And then he kyssit her velvet cheike,

And then he sat and sichit full sore,

“ Chryste ! quhat is this ? ” quod Kirkmabreeke.

“ Saye, Jocke, my manne what canne this meine,

I feire it bodis me nothyng goode,

Either a glammour is on my herte,

Or a thrystynge after womynis bloode.

“ For there is soche ane byrnyng me within,

Alsthoough my bouellis were at stryffe ;

And there is soche ane strummyng in myne heide,

Als if it walde calle forthe my lyffe.”

“ Beshrewe my herte gin I canne telle,”

Quod Jocke, “ but there is in myne heide

A megrim sore ; it muste be lofe,

Or thrystynge eftir bloode indeede.”

“ Lofe ! what is lofe, myne owne manne Jocke ?

So drich e ane paine I nevir did thole ;

Mine body is full of pishmoderis,

And byrnynge like ane verie cole.

“ Brynge me myne kente, for I must quenche

This scowderynge paine by layinge on,

Haste, Jocke, my manne let us begynne,

Or hevin's my witnesse I am gone.

“ Holde, maister myne, I praye thee holde,

Let us have one oder kysse, and then

That wynsum mayden has ane drogge

That wille cure you eithlye of your payne.

“ 'Tis sweiter than the breathe of lyffe,

And ane droppe of the hinnye dewe,

Wille make the herte als soft als sylke,

And hevinis owne joyis on earthe renewe.

“ It will turne ane boye into ane manne,
Ane manne into ane sovran kyng,
Ane mayde into ane brichte angille,
Ane angille to ane common thyng.”

“ I woshe I had it,” quod the Lairde,
“ For in ane fyre myne bouellis burne ;
For goddis lofe, lasse, gif me the drogge,
Before I to ane izel turne.”

“ First you shalle vowe, and you shalle sweare,”
Saide the fayre maye, “ that neuir againne
You on ane womyn will lyft your hand
To shedde her bloode, or gif her payne.”

“ It is fulle harde, then,” quod the Lairde,
“ That alle my joye is paste remeide ;
What shalle be, shalle be, I muste yelde,
Gif me the drogge for I am deide.”

But quhen the Laird had got the drogge
 That eisit him of his byrnynge payne,
 He wals so braif and gallante ane manne
 From strykyng he colde not refrayne.

He gaif her ane smashe upon the noz,
 Ane other on the glowynge cheike,
 And pummellit her sydis with bothe his handis,
 It wals raire sporte for Kirkmabreeke.

But the Lairde he sone grewe sicke againne,
 And grievous sicke, and lyke to die,
 And the mayden wolde not come to him,
 Neither for golde nor courtesye.

“ Och ! never-alaik ! ” then quod the Lairde,
 “ Och ! Jocke, my manne, cause her come in ;
 For gin I get not that witchis coore,
 Myne lyffe it is not worthe ane pyn.

“ And if sho gif not me the drogge,
 I’ll threshe her till her bonis shalle ake ;
 I’ll prufe her for ane weirdlye witche,
 And byrne her bodye at the stake.”

“ But I must telle thee, maister myne,
 That is the worke that wille not wurke,
 D’ye thynke ane maye of fayre Scotlande
 Will cuir be guidit lyke ane Turke ?

“ First you muste sweare, and gif ane pledge
 Of houses, landis, or byrnissit goude
 To beire thee lyke ane gentil manne,
 And treite her als ane mayden shoude.”

“ Why, Jocke, my manne, the sothe to speike,
 I fynde sho hathe my lyffe at wille,
 And to prufe crampe in sic ane caise,
 I trow walde arguy littil skille.

“ And first I’ll sweare by the sone and the mone,
 And alle the sternis in yonder shene,
 And all the honyngsantis abone,
 That cuir bade Porter Pate goodeene,

“ To hyng my keyis unto her syde,
 And make her the mystresse of my halle;
 And quhatsoever sho biddis me do,
 I’ll do it—that is worste of alle!

But Jocke, my manne, thou kennis fulle welle,
 If it is ordainit by the pouris abone,
 That I moste be thrallit by womyn stille,
 Why hevinis wille it moste be done.

I’ll make her my mystresse and my joe,
 And quhen I am sicke as nowe you se,
 Sho moste run from alle, and come at my calle,
 And gif me the drogge before I de.”

Now sho is mystresse of the halle,
 And her demainer is nechte meike,
 The maydenis alle rone at her calle,
 And ilk ane manne of Kirknabreeke.

But our braif Lairde he grumblit sore,
 At odd times, to be kept in thralle,
 Stille by the womyne his mortyl foe,
 And he walde fret and fume withalle.

And sometimes in his barley-hoodis,
 Quhen in the trobil not our sycke,
 He walde gif his mysse ane sounde drubbynge;
 It wals goode reliefe for Kirknabreeke.

It happenit ille, it happenit wors,
 Ane messangere maist impudente
 Came, with his scrollis and warrantis fraught,
 And threatenit foule imprisonment,

For breakyng neerice and moderis bowis,

And grierious damishes they seike,

Als well as bedde and borde through lyffe ;

“ It is the deuille and alle,” said Kirkmabreeke.

The cause is tryit, the Lairde is caste,

And fynit severely for his freike ;

The shrieve discernit him in the costis ;

“ He muste haif good synne,” said Kirkmabreeke.

Och ! but the Lairde was grit in wrathe

At the crabbed law-manne and his brieffe ;

But he knevellit his porter at the gate,

Whilke gaif his stomacke some relieffe.

“ If I muste keipe these false womyne,”

He said, “ not boastfulle shall they be,

I shall be maister of myne house,

And do als they haif done to me.”

He tyit them downe in stronge cradylis,
 And gaif them drynke quhat they colde swille ;
 But then he walde not lette them forthe,
 Neither for goode, nor yet for ille.

“ Nowe, Jocke, my manne, sit them besyde,
 And quhen they crie, and playne to you,
 Then swyng them weille from syde to syde,
 Rocke harde, and syng ba-lillie-lou.

“ And quhen the cradylis are on smoake,
 And splashynge to the verie heide,
 Then, Jocke, my manne, take thou ane sticke,
 And garr them praye and garr them reide.

“ And sho that wille not reide and praye,
 Tille sho no more can heire nor se,
 Then thou shalt skelpe them till they rayre ;
 For that wals the gaite they guidit me.

“ The dirtye shrieve no pinnismente
 Can fors for rockyng them nyght and daye ;
 Nor shalle he put his fynis on me,
 For garryng them reide and garryng them praye.”

With myssis pryde, and moderis moanis,
 And noorice's vilde, and yerliche squeike,
 Soche starke confusioun wals not knowne
 At anie plaise, nor Kirkmabreeke.

For alle the daye wals fyre and feude,
 Withe muckil of woe and wayling dynne ;
 And through the nyghts, for better or wors,
 There stille was lesse of sleipe than synne.

But the Lairde he wals so braif ane manne,
 He onlye laucht at alle the stryffe ;
 But cuir and anone he sayit,
 That womyne war made to plague his lyffe.

Then Jocke he comis unto the Lairde,

“ O maister myne, braif newis I beire,
The wynsum mystress of your herte
Is sone to truste you with ane heire.

“ And you muste laye her in ane lodge,
Fayrer and softer than the sylke ;
And sho muste lie in bedde of downe,
Far whyter than the newe wonne mylke.

“ For sho muste lyke ane ladye be,
In alle her havyngis and her wayis ;
And you muste gif ane thousande poundis,
To buy newe lakis til her stayis.”

“ Ane heire, Jocke is ane nobil thyng,
And sho shall haif bothe braide and wyne ;
But, I haif reasounis to beliefe,
He wille be als moche of youris als myne.

“ Och no ! och no ! myne goode maistere,
God wotte ! I walde not for my lyffe ;
I halde more stricke ane deire lemanne,
Than I walde do ane marryit wyffe.”

“ Then, Jocke, my manne, syn that be true,
I shall be happyeste of menne ;
But quhere I aynce wals with the mayde,
Faythe, Jocke, thou has beene tymis tenne !”

“ That heide thou not, myne deire maistere,
It wals alle done in courtesye ;
We onlye talkit of your fayre manheide,
And of her preesciouse lofe for thee.”

Then the Lairde he wals fulle blithe of blee,
And ane proude manne wals he that daye,
And he toke her to ane statelye bower,
And tendit her lyke ane ladye gaye.

But quhen manie monthis war comit and gane,
 Of cayre, and coste, and tendencye,
 Though doctoris and meedwyffis alle were there,
 The feinte ane dochtere or sonne had sho.

Then the Lairde wals ane sore humblit manne,
 And he colde nochte showe his horne nor heide,
 But he wente unto his maye by nyghte,
 And he knevellit her tittle sho wals deide.

But eftir that sho livit agaynne,
 And made her escaipe righte privatelie,
 And wente unto her deire brothere,
 Ane boisterous captayne of the sea.

And he comis forthe unto the Lairde,
 Sayinge, " Sir, come fyghte me gin you lyke,
 I muste haif satisfactioun goode,
 Or I'll knevel you lyke ane tarriour tyke.

“ I come with you to measure swordis,
And sterne and reide revenge to seike,
For a syster dishonourit and abusit.”

“ The deuille you are !” saide Kirkmabreeke.

“ Welle, maister, syn 'tis goddis wille
That I by womyne muste be cursit,
Thou shalt haif fyghtynge goode thy fille ;
But lette us sitte downe and damm them first.

“ They are the deuillis owne wyked bladis,
And put men from their senses quite ;
That jylte of youris sho hath cheatit me,
More than ane poyet colde indyte.

“ Why, maister, sho tolde me that I sholde
Sone haif ane gallante sonne and heire,
But quhen the dayis of the countyngis came
The deuille ane chylde at alle wals there.”

“ Sir, thou art wors than ane hostel rude,
 And of gentil manne not worthe the name ;
 For, in the name of alle that is geode !
 Howe colde that be myne systeris blame ? ”

The Lairde he turnit him rounde aboute,
 And ower his lefte sholder lookit he,
 And he had not one worde to saye for himselfe,
 So then he lauchit loud lauchteris three.

“ What ! dost thou lauche ? ” the captayne saide,
 “ I scorne familiaritye ; ” —
 Then he gaif him ane lounder on the chaftis,
 And downe upon the grounde felle he.

“ Nowe, craven, thou shalt paye me downe
 Two thousande pounce righte suddenlye,
 For wrongynge of myne deire systere,
 Or else get up and fighte with me.”

But the Laird he wals so braif ane manne,

“ By the rode,” saide he, “ so maye I thryve !

But thou shalt haif fyghtynge eneughe,

For I wille not yielde to manne alyve.”

Then they began so harde ane fyghte,

That from their heidis up rose the reike ;

But there neuir wals ane manne in the lande

That foughte so welle als Kirkmabreeke.

He scornit to stayne his sworde so bryghte

With the captaynis rude unseemly gore ;

But then he foughte with alle his myghte ;

What gallante mortyl colde do more ?

Chryste ! howe he leatherit with his sworde,

And laide about him gallantlye ;

It wald haif made ane gyaunte quake,

And done his stonaeke goode to se.

But the captayne wals ane shabbye lowne,

Abhorrit for cuir be the deide!

He kennit sae weille to cowe the Lairde

That he carvit ane lugge out of his heide.

And then he gaif him woundis eleuin,

Alle gentil scollopis here and there ;

Till the Lairde he stormit and swore by heuin,

That he meanit to leafe his bonis ybare.

“ Come shake we handis, and ceisse our stryffe,

With bloode myne bodye is ouer dyit,

Or boldlye stryke and take my lyffe.”

“ Two thousande pounce,” the captayne replyit.

“ Quhat ? nothyng but two thousande pounce ?

Sonere myne hertis bloode shalt thou haif !”

“ Then fyghte we on,” the captayne saide,

Although myne hande cleafis to my glaif.”

And they foughte on, and they foughte on,
 And aye the Lairde he shiftit grounde ;
 And aye, at ilkane quheile and turne,
 The captayne gaif him ane gracelesse wounde ;
 And neuir ane worde the captayne saide,
 Saif ane, quhilke wals, " two thousande pounde."

Sante Andros ! howe the Lairde did fyghte !
 Though lyke ane droukit henne withe bloode ;
 And aye, at ilkane brande newe prodde,
 He swore ane othe bothe longe and loude.

And aye he bobbit, and aye he foughte,
 And then he strokke so manfullye,
 Als ilkane blowe had beene his laste,
 Tille I wat ane wearyit wyghte wals he.

" Faythe ! I muste yelde," the Lairde ysaide,
 " Nowe grante me graice for him that dyit."
 " So als you gaif, so shalt thou haif,
 Two thousande pounde," the captayne replyt.

“ Two thousande pounce, I saye agayne,
 Yea, and agayne, two thousande pounce ;”
 And aye, quhaneuir he saide the worde,
 He gaif the Lairde ane menselesse wounde.

“ My mallisoun lyghte on thee, hounde,
 Waldest thou kille ane manne upon his kne ?”
 “ I value not thy lyffe, Syr Lairde,
 So moche als one puir Scotis pennye.”

With that he gaif the Lairde ane progge,
 “ Two thousande pounce, Syr Lairde, or dethe ;”
 Then the Lairde he swore ane verie sore oathe,
 And shouted aloud for perfect wrathe.

“ I haif no paiper, pennis, nor ynke,
 Thou menselesse hounde do als I canne.”
 “ Here is ane goode bonde,” the captayne saide,
 “ Wals wrytten by ane law-ware manne.”

“ I haif no ynke,” the Lairde he cryit,
 “ To sygne awaye this toucher goode ;”
 “ Thou shalt not wante,” the captayne replyt,
 “ Here is plentye of thyne gentil bloode.”

The Lairde he toke the synfulle bonde,
 And he layde him lowe downe on the grounde,
 “ I may not sygne,” the Lairde he cryit ;
 The captayne gaif him ane oder wounde.

But stille he enzyit and beverit sore,
 And heassitattt unto the laste ;
 Tille the captayne gaif him ane prodde on the hyppe,
 Quhilk maide him sygne and seale fulle faste.

Then the Lairde he streekit him on the swairde,
 And he cryit als loude als he colde raire ;
 And the vylde captayne wente his wayis,
 With joy and myrthe his sydis were

Then Jocke he cumis unto the Lairde,

“ Deire maister myne, praye, gif me leife,
For I am to be marryit til ane maye,
Without remeide without reprieve.”

“ Myne owne manne, Jocke, art thou gone madde,
To buckil thyselfe to soche ane thyng?
Myne fate sholde be ane lessoun goode,
Quha am abusit paste all beiryng.

“ But thou hast beene ane faythfulle manne,
Ane faythfulle, honeste manne, and kynde,
And thou muste haif fyve hundred pounde,
Though I sholde haif nothyng lefte behynde.”

“ Nowe fare thee welle, myne deire maistere,
Aye haylle and happy mayest thou be,
And maye you fynde ane better manne,
Than thy puir Jocke has beene to thee!”

The Lairde he shoke him by the hand,
 Whylome he sobbit longe and loude ;
 “ Naye I maye seike the worlde alle our
 Before I fynde one half so goode.”

But the newis gaed eiste, and the newis gaed weste,
 And the newis gaed through alle Gallowaye,
 That Jocke, the Lairdis manne, he wals wedde
 Unto the Lairdis owne wynsum Maye.

Some saide he had gotten ane toucher goode,
 The milleris sonne myghte nowe upstreeke ;
 So the newis gaed eiste, the newis gaed weste,
 And at lengthe they came to Kirkmabreeke.

In comis ane muckil peasaund manne,
 None oder manne the Lairde had he,
 And he standis our his chayer backe,
 “ Maister, I’s hand bygge newis to thee ;

“ Withe the milleris sonne, and the sayloris lasse,
 You haif suppit your kale out through the reike ;
 They are marryit, and laughynge downe their sleif.”
 Deuille fetche them bothe !” saide Kirkmabreeke.

“ But yet it is alle the womynis bleme,
 I shalle haif revenge on the haille breide !”
 Then he knevellit seuin or aught of the maydis,
 Quhilke did his herte grit goode indeede.

But he had ane wrynkyllit housekeipyr,
 With braythe wals waur than onie brokkis ;
 And he had ane dokas seruyng manne,
 Als stoopid als ane Gallowaye ox.

And the Lairde he laye, and the Lairde he fand
 Ane kynde of a comynge, stondyng payne ;
 And, in spyte of alle the Lairde colde do,
 The trobil came on him agaynne.

It stondyt up, and it stondyt downe,

Unto his heide, and unto his toe ;

“ Ochon ! ochon ! ” the Lairde he saide,

“ Nowe quhat the deuille shalle I doe ?

“ For I haif none to gif me a drogge,

Though in myne déidclaeis I sholde streike ;

Here I muste thole the lyffe of ane dogge ;

I wille go a wooynge,” saide Kirkmabreeke.

“ Thou wytherit wytche, brynge me myne stocke,

Myne hollyne serke, and blazenit shoone ;

For to the cortynge I am bounde,

To wyinne ane wyffe, and that ryghte soone.”

“ Your hollyne serke it is not clene,

It hathe not smellit sone nor ayre,

But lien and moustenit in the kiste

With methis and melis, sax monthis and mayre.

“ Your stocke lyis ronkilt in the nooke,
 It is lyke ane haggisbag to se ;
 Your blazenit shoone are grene and blewe,
 Your cortynge yet it canna be.”

“ You wrynkyllit haugg gif me myne brawis,
 Or with ane gouffe your gab I’ll steeke ;
 Do you thynke ane manne is to de for you,
 And byrne alyfe ?” saide Kirkmabreeke :

“ For I muste go and corte Ann Smaille,
 Ane lustyer maydene there is none ;
 Sho walde do anis herte moche goode to haif,
 And byrne it up to thynke upon.”

“ Goode sothe gin that sho be your waille,
 You haif chosit blindlans and be guesse ;
 The manne that marryethe Ann Smaille,
 He shalle not boste of happynesse.

“ Sho shall not rysse at brykke of morne,
 To telle your maydenis worke to do ;
 Sho shall not attende you at your calle,
 And keipe you trygge als I do nowe.

“ Then be contente, myne deire maistere,
 And als you are so do remayne ;
 For if you are marryit to ane wyffe,
 Be sure sho shalle gif your bodye payne.”

“ If I haif nouthur hoze, nor shoone,
 Nor stocke to pit arounde my necke,
 I trowe it's tyme, and that ryghte sone,
 To chainge myne deme,” saide Kirkmabreeke.

“ That I sholde lout in lofe to you,
 It maye not stande me muckil steide,
 You cannot gif ane kuillynge drogge,
 Though you sholde se myne body bleide.

“ But if I had the braif Ann Smaille,
 Myne kynde sheerurgeoune for to be ;
 Then mochte I braithe fulle fresche and haille,
 For trobil sore doth byde on me.

“ For thou art soche ane wrynkylit stycke,
 Thou makest manne thrysty for to se ;
 There's not als moche sappe in alle thy bouke
 Als wald lyghten the sterne of ane yonkeris ee.

“ Then bryng to me myne Soneday clothis,
 Myne glofis and owerlaye, without faille ;
 And bryng to me myne blazenit shoone,
 That I maye gang and corte Ann Smaille.”

The housekeipyr sho keust her heide,
 And sho passit ane worde of bruckil menne,
 And sho sette her snood into the glasse,
 And sore sho caiperit als sho went ben.

But sho nouthur walde bryng him hoze nor shoone,
 Nor stocke, nor owerlaye, walde sho carrye ;
 But sho quarrellit withe the maydenis yonge,
 And put them alle in a feiry-farrye.

The Laird he rampit, and moche he cursit,
 And he tryit to sheme her with spechis fayre ;
 And he brainzellit her up fece to fece,
 But the deuille ane sperke of sheme wals there.

“ I telle you, maister, and telle you trewe,
 Keipe als you are, and be not slacke,
 The hettest lofe wille sonest thowe,
 And sopil growe the strongeste backe.

“ And then the hornis into onis heide
 Are not moche honor or auaille ;
 Als Jocke did to the sayloris lasse,
 Some one wille do for braif Ann Smaille.”

“ Then muste I staye and reiste in lofe ?
 I maye not thynk, nor auct, nor speike,
 But stille ane womyn muste gaynsaye :
 Deuille haif you alle !” saide Kirkmabreeke.

He pullit the keyis from off her belte,
 In muckil wrathe and more dysdayne,
 And to the kiste then did he hie,
 And he tozlit up the clothis amayne.

And first he sochte his goode blakke brekis,
 And deipe in the boddome he came at themme ;
 But they were all spotted our with methis,
 And they smellit als ould als Mathusalemme.

And then he cursit the maydenis weille,
 And for some more begoud to seike ;
 And aye he gaif her the oder damm ;—
 It did moche goode to Kirkmabreeke.

His hollyne serke it wals the hewe

Of ane duckis fytt, that swooms the tyde ;

His dowblette laye lyke ane cowis plotte,

And berkinit lyke ane beferis hyde.

And aye he cursit and turnit them our,

And loudlye on the deme did calle ;

Als for his gowden bucklit stocke,

By the rode, it wals not there at alle.

“ Nowe I haif beene plaguit,” quod the Lairde,

“ From the minent that I loosit myne ee,

But alle the womyne euir I knewe,

I neuir sawe soche ane bytshe als thee.”

The damoselle sho brainzellit up,

And loosit her tung withe foulle intente ;

But the Lairde he wals so braif ane manne,

He gaif her ane drubbynge before he wente.

And he's gone ouir the Bonnan hills,
 And downe upon the water of De,
 And aye, at euery steppe, he saide,
 " Ann Smaile is the ladye muste melle withe me."

Quhen he came to her faitheris yette,
 He walde not stande to rappe nor calle,
 But he shotte his hors into the yarde,
 And in he came among them alle.

" Art thou ane boucher?" quod Lairde Smaile,
 " That art comed here fat beife to seike ;
 I haif two ousen fat als grysse ;"
 " I preferre ane queye," saide Kirkmabreeke.

" Myne queyis are not comed to the thille,
 Yet are they helsum, fayre, and sleike,
 But for the shammelis they are not fitte."
 " Suppois we trie," saide Kirkmabreeke.

“ Why, maister boutcher, pryce is alle,
 And you maye gif quhat I maye seike,
 But I telle you they are not fitte to bleide ;”
 “ I wante a breide,” saide Kirkmabreeke.

Then they wente up, and they wente downe,
 By monnie a queye, and monie a stotte ;
 But the Lairde he lookit more wayis than one,
 And sawe them als he sawe them notte.

“ Thou art no jodge,” then quod Lairde Smaile,
 “ For thou art lokynge thru the ayre ;
 Thou neuir lokest at beste of myne,
 But gang’st als thou walde fynde ane hare.

“ Loke rounde, and se quhat nowe thou see’st,
 There is the thyng wille suite thee weille.”
 But the Lairde had tint alle thochte forebye,
 And only thochte on braif Ann Smaile.

“ Sho has the shanke, but and the thie,
 And then sho is alle so trymme and sleike,
 Sho'll suite thee for ane breider weille.”

“ Faythe, that sho wille !” saide Kirkmabreeke.

“ And then quhat nobil breste sho hathe !”
 The Lairde he fydgit but colde not speike :

“ And ilkane joynte, and ilkane lymbe !”
 “ Lorde saye no more,” cryit Kirkmabreeke.

“ Sho shalle be myne ! sho shalle be myne !
 Sho is alle so delicate and sweite !”
 “ Quhat ! wo't thou eate her ?” quod Lairde Smaille.
 “ The Lorde forbyd !” saide Kirkmabreeke.

“ But I wille take her in myne armis,
 And I wille kyss her daye and nyghte !”
 Lairde Smaille he stertit lyke ane steire,
 And he gapit and he glowrit with fryghte.

“ Quhat dost thou speike, thou boutcher manne ?

Saye, art thou foole, or art thou feye ?

I’m ouir lang neir the waldron wyghte,

That meanis to wedde myne fleckerit queye !”

“ Quoiche !” quod the Lairde, “ I did but lacke

Myne better thochte, quhilk lofe makis faille ;

I had no mynde but that we spacke

About your dochter, braif Ann Smaille.”

Lairde Smaille he turnit him rounde aboute,

And he blynkit bauldlye with his ee ;

“ There sholde be lacke of lemanis goode,

Ere I walde grant Ann Smaille to thee :

“ For sho hath fiftie thousande merke

Of toucher goode, if so I canne ;

I’d dryve myne lambis to ane bad selle,

To gif her to ane boutcher manne.”

“ It wals myne lacke of better thochte
 That maide me stille forgette to speike,
 I am no drover nor boutcher manne,
 For I am the Lairde of Kirkmabreeke.

“ I nouthur wantit stotte nor queye,
 But onlie the damoselle fayre Ann Smaille.”
 “ Thou walde haif safit us muckil toyle,
 If thou hadst sonere tauld thyne taille.”

Lairde Smaille he wynkit withe his ee,
 And the lyrke of joye it garit his cheike ;
 And he toke the woere by the hande,
 And he welcumit the Lairde of Kirkmabreeke.

But quhen the houris of the cortynge came,
 The damoselle sette the Lairde at nochte ;
 And she tauld him of the sayloris Maye,
 And how moste gallantlye he foughte.

And the Lairde, he lost his countynance,
 And ane ferce and aunghy manne he grewe ;
 And if sho had not maide her eskaipe,
 He wald haif threshit her blakke and blewe.

And when he mountit on his hors,
 Sho gigglit, and sette up her beike,
 And cryit, " fische on the cauldryffe wooere,
 The dirtye Lairde of Kirkmabreeke !"

Och ! but he wals ane foorious wyghte,
 And that his housekeipyr did feele,
 For he grippit her by the napp of the necke,
 And lyke ane kynnyng he garrit her squeelee !

But yet sho wals ane blythsum deme,
 And though her mouthe it gushit bloode,
 Sho wals gladder nor sho had beene kyssit,
 For sho sawe quhat way the matter stooode.

And aye sho mumpit, and sho mymmit,
 Och ! but sho wals ane kyndlye deme !
 And sho saide sho gratta for uprychte joye
 To see her maister saiffe comit hame.

But the Lairde grewe sycke, and verie sycke,
 And bad of the trobil of lofe wals he,
 He did not knowe quhat he walde do,
 For there wals no lyffe but lemanrye.

And als ane manne quha is verie dry
 With drouthe, als walkynge out the waye,
 He panteth and he pyneth sore
 For ane walle-spyng, his thyrste to laye.

Och ! als he smackis his geysenit gannis,
 To se it bellynge on the greine !
 Or comynge tynkylynge from the roke,
 Als brychte als onie sylver sheine !

But quhan he lokis, and lokis in vayne
 To se this icy sylver burne,
 He drynkis the lew-warm plashye poole,
 Although his stammoche is lyke to turne.

So did the Lairde—he colde not thole ;
 To safe his lyffe it did behofe,
 So he marryit his skrynkite housekeipyr,
 The very meddycyne of lofe.

And och ! sho wals ane wydderit wytche,
 And och ! sho wals ane vulgyr deme,
 And quhan the Lairdis brawe frendis came there,
 Braif manne ! he thochte ane worlde of sheme :

For aye sho mumpit, and sho mymmit,
 And aye sho caiperit with her heide,
 And than sho bracke her folysh jybis,
 Till ilkane gentylis fece turnit reide.

And sho turnit awaye the prettye maydenis,
 For her owrance colde no more be borne ;
 For the gromis they callit her vylder nemis,
 And alle the lande lauchit her to scorne.

And though the Lairde he knevellit her weille,
 And that fulle franke and frequentlye,
 Even though he hassit her blakke and blewe,
 Ane better womyn sho wald not be.

Och ! ille betyde the wydderit wyffe,
 That wals so baise of mannadgemente,
 For manie a strong reprofe sho gatte,
 With buffis and battermente yblente !

And quhensoever the Lairde did heife
 His neiffe in yre, then sho wald calle
 Out "*morder !*" with ane voyce so loude,
 That none regardit her at alle.

But yet the Lairde wald nothyng slacke,
 For to her mendement he did stryve ;
 Till on ane nychte I grieffe to telle,
 This juste correctione did not thryve.

The Lairde had dronken verie moche,
 And gaif her ane knap upon the heide,
 And the vylde haugg, for perfyte spytt,
 Neiste mornyng sho wald gyrnyng deide.

Than the doctoris came with sour grimage,
 And they had knyffis for scalpyng made,
 But the Lairde he swore ane sollom othe,
 They sholde not toche ane hayre of her heide.

“ Quhat ? do you thynke, you scurfy knafis,
 To cutte and carfe ane wyffe of myne,
 More to deforme that feirsome corpe,
 That hathe no neide for hande of thyne ?

“ Had sho beene leevynge, als sho is deide,
 And had her poweris of deuilrye,
 No doctor durst haif scorit her powe,
 Not for the lyffe of his bodye.”

But the Lairde wals grippit by dint of law,
 And ledde out our Glenraston lea ;
 And they leckit him up in ane prisoun straung,
 To byde the brunt of the barronrye.

And aye they soummonit, and aye they swore
 The menne and maydenis of eche degree ;
 And monie impertinente thyngis they speirit ;
 For gentil wychtis they wald not be.

But alle the menne and maydenis wordis,
 (And better prufe they colde not seike,)
 And alle the anseris that they founde,
 Were bad for the Lairde of Kirkmabreeke.

And, lyke moste basse unmannerlye roguis,
 They adjudgit the Lairdes, but ruthe or calle,
 To be hiche hangit lyke ane dogge,
 And carvit by doctoris after alle.

But quhan ane Lorde withe polderit powe,
 And muckil sollom sophistrye,
 Gat up, and tauld the Lairde his doome,
 Lorde! but ane aungrye manne wals he!

And aye he rampit, and he swore,
 And he callit them monie unseimlye neme;
 And he saide they were both folis and knafis,
 For the matter wals alle the womynis bleme.

For, of alle goddis creaturis here belowe,
 They were of the most wyked mynde,
 And they were maide for ane plague to him,
 And ane perfyte curse to alle mankynde.

For alle they did, and alle they saide,
 It wuls kenspeckyl of the deille,
 And if they walde hang them euerye one,
 They walde neuir serfe godde half so weille.

“ Deuille ! that the doctoris had them alle,
 To cutte and carfe insteide of menne,
 For they are so ranke of flesche and bloode,
 They wald gette their fille of cuttyngge then.”

But they ledde him from the jodgemente halle,
 For alle his forthrychte braferye,
 And they lockit him up in ane prisoun straung,
 And ane greifit manne, allace ! wals he.

Then comes ane preste with doure grimass,
 And he saide, “ Sir Lairde you muste repente
 Of alle the synnis that you haif done,
 Or grit wille be your punishmente.

“ For ane griefous synner you haif beene,
 Wors than the tung of manne canne telle ;
 Now leafe your synnis and go to heuin,
 Or haif your synnis and go to helle.”

“ Quhat plaisses are these ?” then quod the Lairde,
 “ For sure als I stande fetterit here,
 I neurir knew them of anie use,
 But to helpe ane manne to curse and sweare.

“ Praye, quhat is heuin ? and quhat is helle ?
 And quhat is repentance ? telle to me :
 For if alle be true that you haif saide,
 Ane haplesse manne I feire I be.”

“ Chryste be your helpe,” then saide the preste,
 “ Thou’rt in the thralle of synne indeide,
 For helle it is the deuillis owne plaise,
 With blauryng brymstane byrnyng reide.

“ They’ll scowder you to ane black yzle,
Or lyke ane reide-hette gaude of airne ;
And they’ll toste you, and toste you for evermore,
Unless that you repente and learne.”

“ Curse on these womyne !” then quod the Lairde,
“ For none of these quirkis they learnit to me,
And if I sholde be stappit in that vylde hole,
Ane ryghte forwyllerit manne I’ll be.

“ They haif brochte me up lyke ane mannerlesse cauffe,
And helde me in perpetual thralle ;
But of all the scrapis they haif brochte me in,
This jobbe of helle is the worste of alle.

“ But stille there is ane comforte lefte,
Ane comforte and not muckil mayre,
If the synneris gang to that vylde plaise,
The womyne I wis shalle alle go there.

“ Och, how I shalle rejoyce to se
 Them branderit lyke ane goode beife steake ;
 For, if they are fryit lyke fatte backon,
 They wille maike the deuillis herte to aike.

“ So I wille byde myne baistynge hette,
 Though scotchit and scowderit I sholde be ;
 It shalle neuir be saide in fayre Scotlande,
 That womyn colde stande it more than me.”

So the Lairde wals hangit at the towne crosse,
 And felle downe deide upon the stonis,
 And the doctoris toke him to their vylde stalle,
 And they pykit the fleshe from off his bonis.

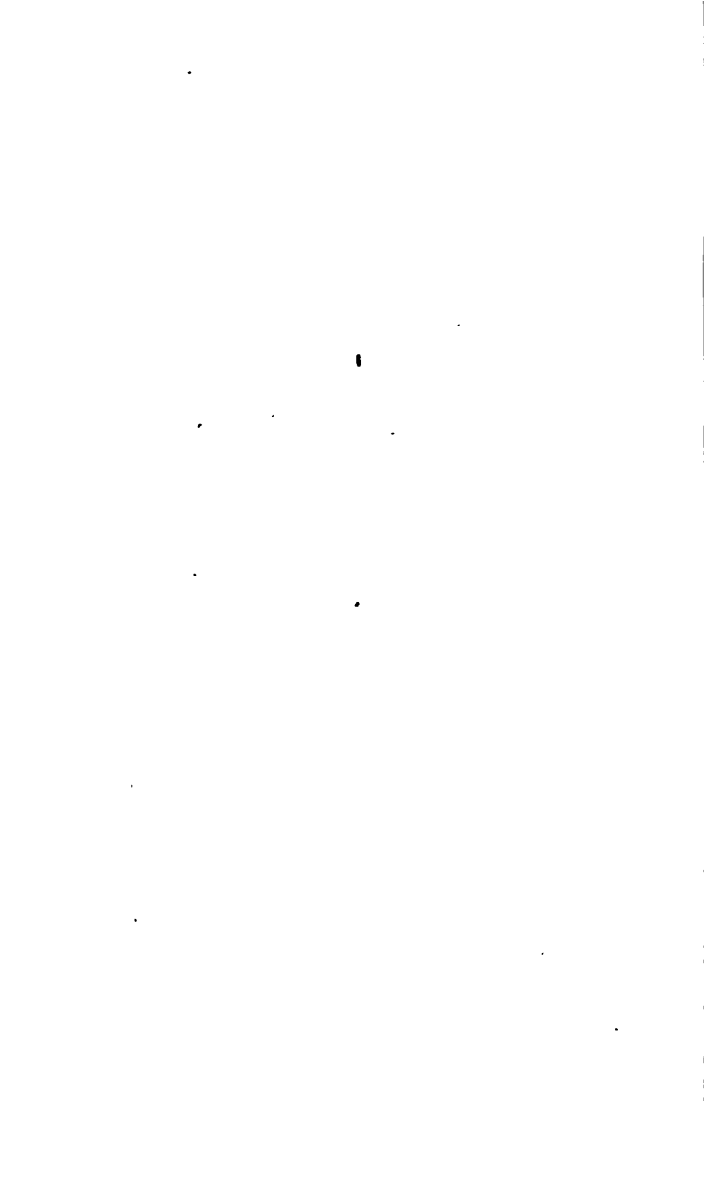
They pykit the fleshe from off his bonis,
 And boylit it up to ane jeellye sleike,
 For physicke to the baisse womyne ;
 And that wals the ende of Kirkmabreeke !

But whether he wente to ane happye plaise,
 Or into the reikkie nokis of helle,
 Or anie oder plaise at alle,
 The preste of the paroche colde not telle.

For quhan I axit him of the caisse,
 He shoke his heide, and strokit his cheike,
 And saide, " if he wanne to heuin abone,
 It wals the better for the Lairde of Kirkmabreeke."

THE

TWEEDDALE RAIDE.



THE

TWEEDDALE RAIDE.

THIS ballad was written by my nephew, Robert Hogg, student in the College of Edinburgh, on purpose for insertion in the Edinburgh Annual Register. He brought it to me, and I went over it with him, and was so delighted with the humour of the piece, that I advised him to send it with his name. The editor, however, declined inserting it; and it is here published, word for word, as sent to him. A natural inclination to admire youthful efforts may make me judge partially; but, I think, if it is not a good imitation of the old Border Ballad, I never saw one. The old castle of Hawkshaw was situated in a wild dell, a little to the Westward of the farm-house of that name, which stands in the glen of Fruid in Tweedsmuir. It was built, and inhabited long, by the Porteouses, an ancient family of that district. A knight of the name of Sir Patrick Porteous of Hawkshaw was living in A. D. 1600. His eldest daughter Janet was married to Scott of Thirlestane. All the places mentioned are in the direct line from Hawkshaw to Tarras, a wild and romantic little river between the Ewes and Liddel. The names of the warriors inserted, are those of families proven

to be residing in the district at the same period of time with Patrick Porteous. I cannot find that the Ballad is founded on any fact or traditionary tale, save that Porteous once, having twenty English prisoners, of whom he was tired, took them out to the top of a hill called the Fala Moss, and caused his men fell them one by one with a mall, and fling them into a large hole for burial. Whilst they were busy with some of the hindmost, one of those previously felled started up from the pit and ran off. He was pursued for a long way, and at last, being hard pressed, he threw himself over a linn in Glen-Craigie, and killed himself. As the pit in which they were buried was in a moss, some of their bones were distinguishable by the shepherds, who digged for them, only a few years ago.

PATE PORTEOUS sat in Hawkahaw tower,

An' O right douf an' dour was he ;

Nae voice of joy was i' the ha',

Nae sound o' mirth or revelry.

His brow was hung wi' froward scowl,

His ee was dark as dark could be ;

An' aye he strade across the ha',

An' thus he spoke right boisterouslye :

“ Yestreen, on Hawkshaw hills o’ green,
My flocks in peace an’ safety strayed ;
To-day, nor ewe, nor steer, is seen
On a’ my baronie sae braid :

“ But I will won, an’ haud my ain,
Wi’ ony wight on Border side ;
Make ready then, my merry men a’,
Make ready, swiftly we maun ride.

“ Gae saddle me my coal-black steed,
Gae saddle me my bonnie gray,
An’ warder, sound the rising note,
For we hae far to ride or day.”

The slogan jar was heard afar,
An’ soon owre hill, owre holt, an’ brae,
His merry men came riding in,
All armed an’ mounted for the fray.

As they fared oure the saddle-yoke,
The moon rase owre the Merk-side bree ;
“ Welcome, auld dame,” Pate Porteous cried,
“ Aft hae ye proved a friend to me.

“ Gin thou keep on, but clud or mist,
Until Glendarig steps we won,
I’ll let you see as brave a chace
As ever down the Esk was run.”

As they rade down by Rangedcleuch ford,
They met Tam Bold o’ Kirkhope town ;
“ Now whar gang ye, thou rank reaver,
Beneath the ae light o’ the moon?”

“ When ye were last at Hawkshaw ha’,
Tam Bold, I had a stock right guid ;
Now I hae neither cow nor ewe
On a’ the bonnie braes o’ Fruid.”

“ O, ever alak !” quo’ auld Tam Bold,
“ Now, Pate, for thee my heart is wae ;
I saw your flocks gang owre the muir
O’ Wingate by the skreigh o’ day.

“ Pate, ye maun ride for Liddel side,
An’ tarry at the Tarras lair ;
Gin they get owre the Border line,
Your ewes an’ kye you’ll see nae mair.”

As they rade owre by Sorbie-swire,
The day-light glimmered on the lea ;
“ O, lak-a-day ! my bonnie gray,
I find ye plaittin’ at the knee.

“ Streek gin ye dow to Tarras flow,
On you depends your master’s a’,
An’ ye’s be fed wi’ bread an’ wine,
When ye gang hame to Hawkshaw ha !”

They spurred owre moss, owre muir, an' fell,
Till mony a naig he swarf'd away ;
At length they wan the Tarras moss,
An' lightit at the skreigh o' day.

The stots came rowtin' up the bent,
Tossin' their white horns to the sun ;
“ Now, by my sooth !” Pate Porteous cried,
“ My owsen will be hard to won.”

Up came the captain o' the gang,
I wat a stalwart lad was he ;
“ What lowns are ye,” he bauldly cried,
“ That dare to step my kye an' me ?”

“ Light down, light down, thou fause Southron,
An' sey a skelp or twa wi' me,
For ye hae reaved my flocks an' kye,
An', by my sooth, revenged I'll be.

“ It’s ne’er be said a Tweeddale knight
Was tamely harried o’ his gear,
That Pate o’ Hawkshaw e’er was cowed,
Or braved by Southron arm in weir.”

Then up an’ spak the English chief,
A dauntless blade I wat was he,
“ Now wha are ye, ye sauncy lown,
That speaks thus haughtilye to me?”

“ My name it is Pate Porteous hight,
Light down, an’ try your hand wi’ me,
For, by my sooth, or thou shalt yield,
Or one of us this day shall die.”

The Southron turned him round about,
An’ lightly on the ground lap he ;
“ I rede thee, Scot, thou meet’st thy death,
If thou dar’st cross a sword wi’ me.

“ Have ye ne’er heard i’ reife or raide,
O’ Ringan’s Rab o’ Thorlberrie?
If ye hae not, ye hae excuse
For cracking here sae crabbedlye.

“ But I can tell thee, muirland Pate,
Wi’ hingin’ mou’ an’ blirtit ee,
Ye’ll tell your wife an’ bairns at hame,
How Ringan’s Robin yerkit thee.”

Pate Porteous was a buirdly wight,
An arm o’ strength an’ might had he,
He brooked nae fear, but made his bragg
In deeds o’ desperate devilrye.

“ Have done,” he cried, “ thou stalwart lown,
Thou Southron thief o’ gallows fame,
I only ken that I am wranged,
An’ thou shalt answer for the same.”

They tied their horses to the birk,
An' drew their swords o' mettle keen ;
But sic a fray, as chanced that day,
On Border-side was never seen.

Pate Porteous was the first ae man
That shawed the red blude to the e'e,
Out o' the Southron's brawny thigh
He carved a slice right dextrously.

“ Now tak thou that, fause Ringan's Rab,
An' muckle good may't do to thee,
'Twill learn ye how to slice the hams
O' my guid kye at Thorlberrie.”

“ It's but a scart,” quo' Ringan's Rab,
“ The stang o' a wasp is waur to bide ;
But, or that we twa part again,
I'll pay it on thy ain backside.”

“ Now, fy lay on !” quo’ Hawkshaw Pate,

“ Now, fy lay on, an’ dinna spare ;

If frae a Southron e’er I flinch,

I’s never wield a weapon mair.”

They fought it lang, they fought it sair,

But scarcely doubtfu’ was the day,

When Southrons round their captain closed,

An’ shouted for the gen’ral fray.

Clash went the swords along the van ;

It was a gallant sight to see :

“ Lay on them, lads,” cried Hawkshaw Pate,

“ Or, faith, we’ll sup but spairinglye.”

“ Now, fy lay on !” quo’ Ringan’s Rab,

“ Lay on them, lads o’ English blude,

The Scottish brand i’ dalesmen’s hand

’Gainst Southland weapon never stude.”

‘ Lay on them, lads,” cried Hawkshaw Pate,
“ Our horses lack baith hay an’ corn ;
An’ we maun a’ hae English naigs
Out owre the Penraw Cross the morn.”

The Tweedies gart their noddles crack,
Like auld pot-metal, yank for yank ;
Montgomery, wi’ his spearmen guid,
He bored them trimly i’ the flank.

An’ Sandy Welsh, he fought an’ swore,
An’ swore an’ fought fu’ desperatelye ;
But Jockie o’ Talla got a skelp
That cluve him to the left e’e-bree.

The Murrays fought like dalesmen true,
An’ stude i’ reid blude owre the shoon ;
The Johnstons, an’ the Frazers too,
Made doughty wark or a’ was done.

The Tods an' Kerrs gaed hand an' gluve,
An' bathed i' blude their weapons true ;
An' Jamie o' Carterhope was there,
An' Harstane stout, an' young Badlewe.

Brave Norman Hunter o' Polmood,
He stood upon the know sae hie,
An', wi' his braid-bow in his hand,
He blindit mony a Southron e'e.

The blude ran down the Tarras bank,
An' reddened a' the Tarras burn ;
" Now, by my south," said Hawkshaw Pate,
" I never stood sae hard a turn.

" I never saw the Southrons stand
An' brave the braidsword half so weel."
" Deil tak the dogs !" cried Sandy Welsh,
" I trow their hides are made o' steel.

“ My sword is worn unto the back,
An’ jagged and nickit like a thorn ;
It ne’er will ser’ another turn,
But sawin through an auld toop-horn.

“ But, by this sword, an’ by the rood,
An’ by the deil an’ a’ his kin,—”
“ Lord ! stop your gab,” quo’ auld Will Tod,
“ Sic swearin’ is a deadly sin.

“ Haud still your gab, an’ ply your sword,
Then swear like hell when a’ is done ;
If I can rightly judge or guess,
The day’s our ain, an’ that right soon.”

They beat them up the Tarras bank,
An’ down the back o’ Birkhope brae ;
Had it no been the Tarras flow,
Nae Englishman had ’scaped that day.

There were three an' thirty Englishmen
Lay gasping on the Tarras moss,
An' three and thirty mae were ta'en,
An' led out owre the Penraw Cross.

The Tweeddale lads gat horse an' kye,
An' ransom gowd, an' gear their fill,
An' aye sin syne they bless the day
They fought sae weel on Tarras hill.

Pate Porteous drave his ewes an' kye
Back to their native hills again ;
He hadna lost a man but four,
An' Jockie o' Talla he was aye.

Stout Ringan's Rab gat hame wi' life,
O he was yetherit an' yerkit sair ;
But he came owre the Penraw Cross
To herry Tweeddale glens nae mair.

ROBIN AN' NANNY.



ROBIN AN' NANNY.

THIS ballad, or rather rural tale, was written at a period of life so early, that I have quite forgotten when, and in what circumstances, it was written ; but I think I have had the manuscript by me upwards of twenty years. It is exceedingly imperfect ; but a natural fondness for the productions of my early years, and some recollections that have scarcely left a trace behind, induce me to give it a place. It has not the least resemblance in style to ought I have written since, and I believe I have nothing in my hand that was previously written. Those who wish me well will not regret that my style has undergone such a manifest change ; for into a worse one it could scarcely have fallen.

SNELL an' frosty was the dāwin',

Blue the lift as ony bell,

Cauld the norlan' wind was blawin',

Fast the drift came owre the fell.

Whan poor Nanny, softly creepin'
Out frae yont her auld gudeman,
Wha she trow'd was soundly sleepin';
Though he heard how a' was gaun.

Wi' her heather-cowe clean wiping
A' the floor, frae end to end ;
Soon the reek gaed blue an' piping
Up the lum wi' mony a bend.

Then within her little sheelin',
On a wee lock cosey hay,
Nanny cowered, and humbly kneelin',
Sighin', thus begoud to pray :—

“ Father o' the yird an' heaven,
Thou wha leev'st aboon the sky,
Wha a mind to me hast given,
An' a saul that canna die ;

“ Though I’ve often wandered frae thee,
Thoughtless o’ thy love to me ;
Nae where can I flee but to thee,
Nae ane can I trust but thee.

“ Little hae I had to grieve me ;
Now my heart is unco sair ;
My puir lassie, forced to leave me,
Take, O take her to thy care !

“ Whan thou gae’st her I was gratefu’,
Whan thou tak’st her I’ll resign ;
Why sude I be fleyed or fretfu’ ?
She’s i’ better hands than mine.

“ But she’s bonnie, young, an’ friendless,
Gars me think o’ her the mair ;
Yet I’ll trust her to thy kindness ;
Take, O take her to thy care !”

Robin, though he coudna see her,
Listened weel to a' she said ;
Fixed his kindly heart was wi' her,
Joinin' ilka vow she made.

Through the cot then bustled Nanny,
Busy out an' in she ran ;
Yet wi' footsteps fleet an' cannie,
Laith to waken her gudeman.

" Hout," quo' he, " ye crazy gawkie,
What has gart ye rise sae soon ?"
" Troth, gudeman, our wee bit hawkie
Twice had raised the hungry croon.

" At the door the chickens yaupit,
Keen the wind comes owre the lea,
Deep wi' snaw the grun' is happit,
Puir things ! they war like to die."

“ Auld, dementit, donnart creature,
Gude-sake ! quat this fyky way,
Else your cares will bang your nature,
An’ ye’ll dee afore your day.

“ Aye sin ever Mary left ye,
A’ the night ye hotch an’ grane ;
Ye’ve o’ sleep an’ rest bereft me,
Lye i’ peace, or lye your lane.

“ Langer here she wadna tarry ;
But she’s virtuous as she’s fair :
What’s to ail our bonnie Mary ?
What means a’ this restless care ?”

“ Dinna, Robin, dinna vex me,
Laith am I frae rest to keep ;
But my dreams sae sair perplex me,
I dare nouthier rest nor sleep.

“ Dreams maun a' be redd, believe me ;
Visions are nae sent in vain ;
Reason canna now relieve me,
Canna ease my eerie pain.

“ Surely whan asleep we're lyin',
Like a lump o' senseless clay,
Then our sauls are busy flyin',
Viewin' places far away.”

“ Wad ye, stupit, crazy body,
Quite owreturn philosophye ?
Owre an' owre again I've showed ye
Sic a thing can never be.

“ If our sauls war sent a-rangin',
To Jerus'lem or the moon,
In a moment wakenin', changin',
How cou'd they come back sae soon ?

“ They're within us, never doubt them ;
If they dandered here an' there,
What way cou'd we leeve without them ?
We wad never waken mair.

“ Nanny, whan your spirit leaves you,
Lang an' sound your sleep will be !
Let nae wayward fancies grieve you ;
Tear o' thine I downa see.”

“ Never war my dreams sae eirie ;
But their meanin' I hae seen ;
I, this mornin', rase mair weary
Than I gaed to bed yestreen.

“ Never mair, whate'er betide me,
May I sic a vision see ;
My dear Mary sat aside me,
Lovely as she wont to be.

“ On her lap a burdie restit,
Kind it look'd, an' sweetly sang ;
Whan her lily hand caressed it,
Wi' its notes the woodlands rang.

“ Aye it waxed, an' flaffed, an' hootit,
Till an awesome beast it grew ;
Still she fonder grew about it,
Though it pecked her black an' blue.

“ Soon her face in beauty's blossom,
A' wi' blude an' fleekers hang ;
Still she pressed it to her bosom,
Grat, but wadna let it gang.

“ A' her breast was torn an' woundit,
Or the monster took its flight ;
Never was my heart sae stoundit !
Never saw I sic a sight !

“ Something ails our bonnie Mary,
Sure as glents the mornin' sun.”
Robin leugh, an' jibit sairly,
But wi' him it was nae fun.

Up he rase, wi' fears inspired,
Rowed him in his gaucy plaid,
To the hay-stack dass retired,
Laid his bonnet off his head :

Then, in tone right melancholy,
Lyin' grooffin' on the hay,
There he prayed, in words most holy,
For his Mary far away.

Mary was baith young an' clever,
Sweet as e'enin's softest gale ;
Fairer flower than Mary never
Blossomed in a Highland dale.

Blythe the lark her notes can vary,
Light the lamb skips owre the lea;
Blyther than the lark was Mary,
Lighter than the lamb was she.

She had seen the eighteenth summer
Hap wi' blooms the Highland lea,
Weel the heather-bells become her,
Wavin' owre her dark ee-bree.

Muckle lair they twa had taught her,
Fittin' her for ony thing:
Mary was an only daughter;
She cou'd read, an' write, an' sing.

Now that she's for service ready,
She maun gae her bread to earn;
To the town to wait her lady,
An' the city gates to learn.

Nanny sighed, an' grat, an' kissed her—

She was aye a bairn sae kind !

Robin just shook hands, an' blessed her,

Bidding her her Maker mind.

Cauld, that day, came in the winter,

Light she tripped adown the dale ;

Dash, a gig came up ahint her,

Swifter than the mountain gale.

“ Bonnie lassie, ye'll be weary,

Will ye mount an' ride wi' me ? ”

“ Thank ye, Sir ; but, troth, I'm eiry,

Sic a sight ye doughtna see.

“ Gentle fo'ks are unco saucy,

Tauntin' aye the blate an' mean.”

“ Woh ! ” quo' he, “—your hand, my lassie,

Sit ye there an' tak a lean.”

Crack the whip came,—snortin', prancin',
Down the glen the courser sprang ;
Mary's heart wi' joy was dancin',
Baith her lugs wi' pleasure rang !

Whan the eagle quits his eyrie,
Fast he leaves the cliffs behind ;
Swifter flew our spark an' Mary—
Faster cluve the winter wind.

Ford nor ferry aince detained them,
Fleet they skimmed the dale an' doone—
Steeple, towers, an' hills, behind them
Vanished like the settin' moon.

At the stages where they rested,
Fast they drank the blude-red wine ;
Mary thought, (her smile confessed it),
Never man was ha'f sae kin'.

By the way his arm was round her,
Firm, for fear that she should fa' ;
Aft his glances raised her wonder,
Aye she blushed an' turned awa.

First he pressed her hand—he kissed it—
Then her cheek, wi' sair ado—
Lang or night, whane'er he listit,
Aye he pree'd her cherry mou'.

Kind her heart, o' guile unwary,
Taken by his generous way,
Bonnie Mary, artless Mary,
Step by step, was led astray.

Through the window aft they taukit,
Whan the street was hushed an' still ;
Ilka Sunday out they walkit,
To the glen or braken hill.

Whan the flower o' gowd sae yellow
Owre the broom-wood splendour threw ;
Whan the breeze, sae mild an' mellow,
Frae the primrose drank the dew.

In a bower o' willow bushes,
Oft at noontide wad they lye,
Strewed wi' flowers, an' saft wi' rushes,
Happed wi' foliage frae the sky.

Owre their heads his rural ditty
Sang the blackbird on the spray :
Pretty songster ! O, for pity,
Cease thy am'rous roundelay !

See, the modest daisy blushes !
Bonnie birks they wave an' weep !
While the breeze, among the bushes,
Wails for virtue lulled asleep.

Can ye pour your notes sae airy,
Wildly owre the woodland dale,
While the kind and bonnie Mary
Ever maun the time bewail ?

Mary's parents sairly missed her,
Word o' her they coudna learn ;
Love an' sorrow sae harassed her,
She grew an unmindfu' bairn.

A' their reas'nin', late an' early,
Only hetter blew the coal—
Robin's heart misgae him sairly,
Nanny cou'd nae langer thole.

Robin washed his wedding bonnet,
Hang it on the clipse to dry ;
Sindry methes an' mael's war on it ;
It had lien lang idle by.

Robin's Sunday coat and doublet

Nanny brushed fu' braw an' clean ;

Streekit they had lien untroublit—

Seldom needit—seldom seen.

Clean his chin, sae aft weel theekit ;

White his serk as driven snaw ;

His gray hair weel kaimed an' sleekit,

Robin looked fu' trig an' braw.

“ Nanny, now it's near midsimmer,

Keep the yows an' kye frae skaith,

I maun see the dear young limmer,

Though to gang sae far I'm laith.

“ She might write, the careless hussey,

Gladly I wad postage pay ;

But, nae doubt, she's hadden busy,

Maybe baith by night an' day.

“ She’s a trust consigned by Heaven
To our arms to guard an’ guide ;
She’s a gift in kindness given ;
She’s our ain whate’er betide.

“ Let nae sinfu’ doubts distress ye ;
Heavy news are waur than nane :
If the lassie’s fair an’ healthy,
In a week I’ll come again.”

Nibbie in his nieve he lockit,
Round his waist his plaid he twined ;
Bread an’ cheese in ilka pocket,
Robin left his cot behind.

Scen’ry grand, nor castle gaudy,
Drew ae glowr frae Robin’s ee ;
On he joggit, slaw an’ sadly,
Nought but Mary mindit he.

Men an' boys at nought he set them,
Question coudna draw reply ;
Every bonnie lass that met him,
Sharp he looked till she was by.

Aye as he the town drew nigher,
Wonder kythed i' Robin's leuks ;
Chariots rattled by like fire—
“ What a routh o' lords an' dukes !”

Aye his bonnet aff he whuppit ;
Time-o'-day gae to them a'—
Up the mail came—Robin stoppit—
“ Here's the grandest chap ava !

“ A' his servants ride without there,
Some to wait, an' some to ca' ;
He's been giein' alms, nae doubt there,
Gars his man the trumpet blaw.”

Aye the lords came thick an' thicker,
Knights an' great men round him swarm ;
O' their honours to mak sicker
Robin's bonnet's 'neath his arm.

Crippled, thirsty, baugh, an' tired,
To the Cross he wan at last ;
Stood amazed, an' aft inquired,
“ Where's the folk gaun a' sae fast ?”

For the lady's house he lookit,
Wha enticed his bairn frae him ;
Wi' his stick the door he knockit,
Then stood quakin' every limb.

Sic a picture ne'er was seen in
Edinburgh town before,
Robin owre his pike-staff leanin',
At the lady's glancin' door.

A' his face was din wi' owder ;
Short an' deep his breath he drew ;
His gray locks, owre ilka shouder,
Waved wi' ilka blast that blew.

Shoon, wi' buckles bright as may be ;
Coat the colour o' the sea ;
Wide the cuffs, an' ilka laibie
Fauldit owre aboon his knee.

When he heard the bolt a-loosin',
Round he turned his wat'ry ee ;
Hafins feared, an' half rejoicin',
Mary's face he hoped to see.

'Twas a madam, proud an' airy,
Spiered what made him there to ca'—
“ 'Twas to see his daughter Mary : ”
“ Mary wasna there ata !

“ Mistress lang had slyly watched her,
Doubtin' sair her 'haviour light,
An' wi' gentle spark had catched her
At the dead hour o' the night.

“ Straight she turned her aff in anger,
Quite owre ruin's fearfu' brink ;
Virtue steels her breast nae langer,
As she brewed she now maun drink.”

Robin heaved his staff the doorward,
Looked as he'd attack the place ;
Just as he was rushin' forward,
Clash the door came in his face.

Now a place, his grief to vent in,
Fast he sought, an' in the dust
A' the night he lay lamentin',
Till his heart was like to burst

Aft he cried, " My only daughter,
How my hopes are marred in thee !
O that I had sooner sought her,
Or had she but staid wi' me !

" Should I gang an' never see her,
How could I her mother tell ?
Should I gang an' no forgie her,
How will God forgie mysel ?"

Lang he spiered at shops an' houses,
An' at queans he chanced to meet ;
Some fo'k bade him seek the closses—
Some the stairs aneath the street.

Let nae sufferer, all unwary,
Broken-hearted though he be ;
Nor the proud voluptuary
Bend to Heaven a hopeless ee.

Sure as flows the silver fountain ;
 Sure as poortith meets disdain ;
Sure as stable stands the mountain ;
 Sure as billows heave the main—

There's a God that rules above us—
 Rules our actions to his mind ;
One will ever—ever love us,
 If our hearts are meek an' kind.

Robin wand'rin' late an' early,
 At the dead o' a' the night,
Heard a lassie pleadin' sairly,
 In a sad and waefu' plight.

“ Let me in”, she cried, “ till mornin' ;
 Then I'se trouble you nae mair.”
They within, her mis'ry scornin',
 Stormed, an' threatened unco sair.

“ A’ your whinin’s out o’ season ;
We hae borne w’ye mony a day ;
Had ye listened ought to reason,
Ye had been a lady gay ;

“ Might hae in your chariot ridden,
Clad wi’ silks o’ ev’ry hue,
Had ye done as ye were bidden :—
Get ye gone, or ye shall rue.”

“ O, I am a helpless creature,
Let me in, for sair I rue !
Though it shocks my very nature,
What you bid me I will do.”

“ Haud !” quo’ Robin, hastin’ near her,
“ Haud, or else ye’re lost for aye !
Think o’ friends wha hold you dearer,
Think, what will your parents say !”

Straight she caught his hand an' kissed it,
Sad she looked, but nought could say;
Round his knees her arms she twistit,
Shrieked, an' faintit quite away.

Weel she kend his every feature,
Spottit plaid, an' bonnet blue—
Ye hae felt the throes o' nature—
Need I tell the case to you?

'Twas his ain, his bonny Mary,
Here he fand in sic a state,
Sufferin', for ae step unwary,
Near a sad an' shamefu' fate.

She had loved, an' sair repentit—
She had wept an' wept her fill;
But all proffers had resentit
That could lead her mair to ill.

Woman, Nature's bonniest blossom,
Soft desire may beet thine eye,
Yet within thy heavin bosom
Dwells deep-blushing modestye.

O let never lover sever
From its stalk this gem of morn,
Else it droops an' dies for ever,
Leavin bare the festerin' thorn.

Woman's maiden love's the dearest,
Sweetest bliss, that Heaven can give,
Thine the blame the garland wearest,
If through life it diana live.

Sweet the rose's early blossom,
Opening to the morning ray ;
For one blemish on its bosom,
W'ould you crush it in the clay ?

Though the tender scion's woundit
By a reptile's pois'nous twine,
Must the noxious weeds around it
In its ruin all combine ?

Female youth, to guile a stranger,
Doomed too oft to endless pain,
Set the butt of every danger,
Left the mark of cold disdain.

Should stern justice blot a grievance
Out from Nature's mighty sum,
First of a' may plead forbearance,
Female innocence o'ercome.

Robin showed his dear affection,
Gae his bairn a welcome kiss,
Never made one harsh reflection,
Never said she'd done amiss.

To her native cottage led her,
Heard her suffrins by the way ;
Short the answer Robin' made her,
“ A' like lost sheep gang astray !”

Thus, from guilt an' dire destruction,
Robin saved his fallen child ;
Mourned alone her base seduction,
Won her soul by manners mild.

Aft, of Heaven, in accents movin',
Pardon begged for errors past ;
Kind regard, an' language lovin',
Marked the parent to the last.

Hearts replete with love an' duty
Easiest levelled i' the dust ;
Guardians over female beauty,
Nice an' precious is your trust.

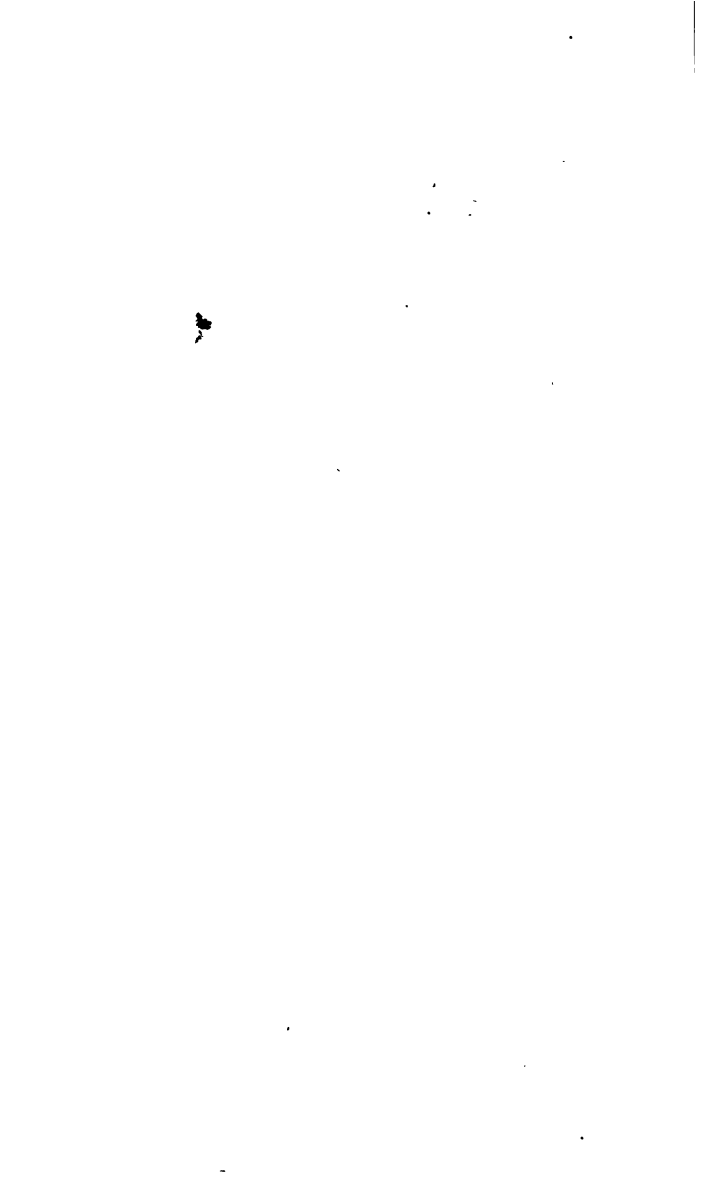
Should stern justice blot ae grievance,

Out o' Nature's mighty sum,

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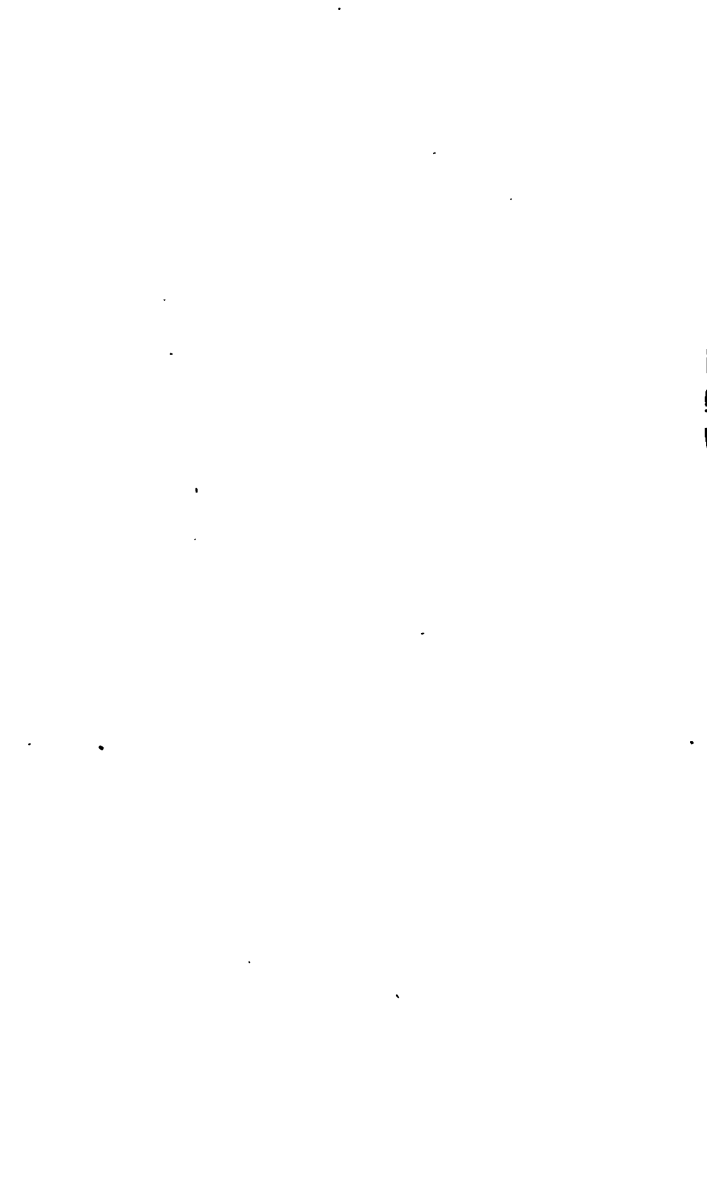
Female innocence o'ercome.





SANDY TOD.

A SCOTTISH PASTORAL.



SANDY TOD.

A SCOTTISH PASTORAL.

Who has learned in love to languish ?

Who has felt affliction's rod ?

They will mourn the melting anguish,

And the loss o' Sandy Tod.

Sandy was a lad o' vigour,

Lithe an' tight o' lith an' limb ;

For a stout an' manly figure,

Few could ding or equal him.

In a cottage poor and nameless,

By a little bouzy linn,

Sandy led a life right blameless,

Far frae ony strife or din.

Annan's fertile dale beyon' him
Spread her fields an' meadows green ;
Hoary Hartfell towered aboon him,
Smiling to the sun—gude-e'en.

Few his wants, his wishes fewer ;
Save his flocks, nae care had he ;
Never heart than his was truer,
Tender to the last degree.

He was learned, and every tittle
That he read, believed it true ;
Saving chapters cross an' kittle,
He could read his Bible through.

Aft he read the acts of Joseph,
How wi' a' his friends he met ;
Aye the hair his noddle rose off,
Aye his cheeks wi' tears were wet.

Seven bonnie buskit simmers

O'er the Solway Frith had fled,

Sin' a flock o' ewes an' gimmers,

Out amang the hills he fed.

Some might brag o' knowledge deeper,

But nae herd was loed sae weel ;

Sandy's hirsel proved their keeper

Was a cannie carefu' chiel.'

Aye, when ony tentless lammie

Wi' its neibours chanced to go,

Sandy kend the careless mammy,

Whether she cried *mae* or no.

Worldly wealth an' grandeur scorning

Weel he liked his little bield ;

Ilka e'ening, ilka morning,

Sandy to his Maker kneeled.

You wha bouze the wine sae nappy,
An' are fanned wi' loud applause,
Can ye trow the lad was happy?
Really, 'tis believed, he was.

In the day sae dark an' showery,
I hae seen the bonnie bow,
When arrayed in all its glory,
Vanish on the mountain's brow.

I hae seen the rose of Yarrow,
While it bloomed upon the spray,
Blushing by its flaunting marrow,
Quickly fade, an' fade for aye.

Fading as the forest roses,
Transient as the radiant bow,
Fleeting as the shower that follows,
Is dame Happiness, below.

Unadmired she'll hover near ye,
In the rural sport she'll play ;
Woo her,—she'll at distance hear ye,
Press her,—she is gane for aye.

She had Sandy aye attendit ;
Seemed obedient to his nod ;
Now his happy hours are endit,—
Lack-a-day for Sandy Tod !

I' the kirk ae Sunday sittin',
Where to be he seldom failed,
Sandy's tender heart was smitten
Wi' a wound that never healed.

Sally, dressed in hat an' feather,
Worshipped in a neibrin' pew ;
Sandy sat—he kendna whether :
Sandy felt—he wistna how.

Though the parson charmed the audience,
An' drew tears frae mony een,
Sandy heard a noise, like baudrons
Murring i' the bed at e'en !

Aince or twice his sin alarmed him,—
Down he looked an' breathed a prayer ;
Sally had o' mind disarmed him,
Heart an' soul an' a' was there !

Luckily her een were from him ;
Aye they beamed anither road ;
Aince a smiling glance set on him—
“ Mercy, Lord ! ” quo' Sandy Tod.

A' that night he lay an' turned him,
Fastit a' the following day,
Till the eastern lamps were burnin',
An' ca'd up the gloaming gray.

Res'lute made by desperation,

Down the glen in haste he ran ;

Soon he reached her habitation,

A forfoughten love-sick man.

I wad sing the happy meeting,

Were it new or strange to thee ;

Weel ye ken, 'tis but repeating

What has passed 'tween ane an' me.

Ae white hand around me pressed hard,

Oft my restless heart has felt ;

But when hers on Sandy rested,

His fond heart was like to melt !

Sandy's breast wi' love was huntin',

Modest Sally speechless lay,

Orion's sceptre bored the mountain,

Loud the cock proclaimed the day.

Sandy rase—his bonnet daddit—
Begged a kiss—gat nine or ten ;
Then the hay, sae rowed an' saddit,
Towzled up that nane might ken.

You hae seen, on April morning,
Light o' heart the playful lamb,
Skipping, dancing, bondage scorning,
Wander heedless o' its dam.

Sometimes gaun, an' sometimes rinning,
Sandy to his mountains wan ;
Roun' about his flocks gaed singing ;
Never was a blyther man.

Never did his native nation,
Sun or sky, wear sic a hue ;
In his een the hale creation
Wore a face entirely new.

Weel he loed his faithfu' Ruffler,
Weel the bird sang on the tree ;
Meanest creatures doomed to suffer,
Brought the tear into his ee.

Sandy's heart was undesigning,
Soft an' loving as the dove,
Scarcely could it bear refining
By the gentle fire o' love.

Sally's blossom soon was blighted
By untimely winter prest ;
Sally had been wooed, an' slighted,
By a farmer in the West.

But a wound that baffled healing,
Came from that once cherished flame,
Fell disease, in silence stealing,
I'ressed upon her lovely frame.

Her liquid eye, so brightly meek,
Grew dim—the pulse of life beat low ;
The rose still bloomed upon her cheek,
But ah ! it wore a hectic glow.

Every day to Sandy dearer,
Mair bewitching, an' mair sweet ;
Aince when he gaed West to see her
She lay in her winding-sheet.

Yet the farmer still was cheery,
Reckless, careless o' his crime,
Though the maid that loed him dearly
He had slain in early prime.

Sternies, blush, an' hide your faces !
Veil thee, mōen, in sable hue !
Else thy locks, for human vices,
Soon will dreep wi' pity's dew !

Thou, who rul'st the rolling thunder !

Thou, who dart'st the flying flame !

Wilt thou vengeance aye keep under,

Due for injured love an' fame ?

Cease, dear maid, thy kind bewailing,

In thy ee the tear-drops shine ;

Cease to mourn thy sex's failing,

I may drap a tear for mine.

Man, the lord o' the creation,

Lightened wi' a ray divine,

Lost to feeling, truth, an' reason,

Lags the brutal tribes behind !

You hae seen the harmless conie,

Following hame its mate to rest,

One ensnared, the frightened cronie

Flee amazed wi' panting breast—

So amazed, an' dumb wi' horror,
Sandy fled he kendna where ;
Never heart than his was sorer,
It was mair than he could bear.

Seven days on yonder mountain
He lay sobbing, late an' soon,
Till discovered by a fountain,
Railing at the dowie moon.

Weeping a' the day he'd wander
Through yon dismal glem alane ;
By the stream at night wad dander,
Raving o'er his Sally's name.

Shunned an' pitied by the world,
Lang a humbling sight was he,
Till one frenzied moment hurled
Him to lang eternity.

Sitting on yon steep sae rocky,

Fearless as the boding crow,—

No; dear maid, I winna shock thee,

Wi' the bloody scene below.

'Neath yon aik, decayed an' rottin',

Where the hardy woodbine twines,

Now in peace he lies forgotten ;

Owre his head these simple lines :—

“ Lover, pause, while I implore thee,

Still to walk in Virtue's road ;

An' to say, as ye walk o'er me,

‘ Lack-a-day for Sandy Tod ! ’ ”

FAREWELL TO ETTRICK

FAREWELL, green Ettrick ! fare-thee-weel !

I own I'm unco laith to leave thee ;

Nane kens the half o' what I feel,

Nor half the cause I hae to grieve me !

There first I saw the rising morn ;

There first my infant mind unfurled,

To ween that spot where I was born,

The very centre of the world.

I thought the hills were sharp as knives,

An' the braid lift lay whome'd on them,

An' glowred wi' wonder at the wives

That spak o' ither hills ayon' them.

As ilka year gae something new,
Addition to my mind or stature,
So fast my love for Ettrick grew,
Implanted in my very nature.

I've sung, in mony a rustic lay,
Her heroes, hills, and verdant groves ;
Her wilds an' vallies ; fresh and gay,
Her shepherds' and her maidens' loves.

I had a thought,—a poor vain thought !
That some time I might do her honour ;
But a' my hopes are come to nought,
I'm forced to turn my back upon her.

She's thrown me out o' house an' hauld,
My heart got never sic a thrust !
An' my poor parents, frail an' auld,
Are forced to leave their kindred dust.

But fare-ye-weel, my native stream,

Frae a' regret be ye preserved !

Ye'll may be cherish some at hame,

Wha dinna just sae weel deserve 't.

There is nae man on a' your banks

Will ever say that I did wrang him ;

The lasses hae my dearest thanks

For a' the joys I had amang them.

Though twined by rough an' ragin seas,

An' mountains capt wi' wreaths o' snaw,

To think o' them I'll never cease,

As lang as I can think ava.

I'll make the Harris rocks to ring

Wi' ditties wild, when nane shall hear ;

The Lewis shores shall learn to sing

The names o' them I lo'ed sae dear ;

But there is ane aboon the lave,
I'll carve on ilka lonely green ;
The sea-bird tossin' on the wave,
Shall learn the name o' bonnie Jean.

Ye gods take care o' my dear lass !
That as I leave her I may find her ;
Till that blest time shall come to pass,
When we shall meet nae mair to sinder.

Fareweel, my Ettrick ! fare-thee-weel !
I own I'm unco laith to leave thee ;
Nane kens the half o' what I feel,
Nor half o' that I hae to grieve me.

My parents crazy grown wi' eild,
How I rejoiced to stand their stay !
I thought to be their help an' shield,
An' comfort till their hindmost day ;

Wi' gentle hand to close their een,
An' weet the yird wi' mony a tear,
That held the dust o' ilka frien';
O' friends sae tender an' sincere:

It winna do :—I maun away
To yon rough isle, sae bleak an' dun;
Lang will they mourn, baith night an' day
The absence o' their darling son.

An' my dear Will! how will I fen',
Without thy kind an' ardent care?
Without thy verse-inspirin' pen,
My muse will sleep, an' sing nae mair.

Fareweel to a' my kith an' kin!
To ilka friend I held sae dear!
How happy hae we often been,
Wi' music, mirth, an' hamely cheer!

Nae mair your gilded banks at noon,
 Swells to my sang in echos glad ;
Nae mair I'll screed the rantin' tune,
 That hafins put the younkers mad.

Nae mair amang the haggs an' rocks,
 While hounds wi' music fill the air,
We'll hunt the sly an' sulky fox,
 Or trace the wary circlin' hare !

My happy days wi' you are past,
 An', wae's my heart, will ne'er return !
The brightest day may overcast,
 An' man was made at times to mourn.

But if I ken my dyin' day,
 Though a foreworn an' wae'fu' man,
I'll tak my staff, an' post away,
 To yield my life where it began.

If I should sleep nae mair to wake,

In yon far isle beyond the tide,

Set up a headstane for my sake,

An' prent upon its ample side ;—

“ In memory of a shepherd boy,

Who left us for a distant shore ;

Love was his life, and song his joy ;

But now he's dead—we add no more !”

Fareweel, green Ettrick ! fare-thee-weel !

I own I'm something wae to leave thee ;

Nane kens the half o' what I feel,

Nor half the cause I hae to grieve me !

THE
AUTHOR'S ADDRESS

TO HIS
AULD DOG HECTOR.

COME, my auld, towzy, trusty friend,
What gars ye look sae dung wi' wae?
D'ye think my favour's at an end,
Because thy head is turnin' gray?

Although thy strength begins to fail,
Its best was spent in serving me;
An' can I grudge thy wee bit meal,
Some comfort in thy age to gie?

For mony a day, frae sun to sun,

We've toiled fu' hard wi' ane anither ;

An' mony a thousand mile thou'st run,

To keep my thraward flocks thegither.

To nae thrawn boy nor naughty wife,

Shall thy auld banes become a drudge ;

At cats an' callans a' thy life,

Thou ever bor'st a mortal grudge.

An' whiles thy surly look declared,

Thou loe'd the women warst of a' ;

Because my love wi' thee they shared,

A matter out o' right or law.

When sittin' wi' my bonnie Meg,

Mair happy than a prince could be,

Thou placed'st thee by her other leg,

An' watched her wi' a jealous ee.

An' then at ony start or flare,
Thou wad'st hae worried furiously;
While I was forced to curse an' swear,
Afore thou wad'st forbidden be.

Yet wad she clasp thy towzy paw;
Thy gruesome grips were never skaithly;
An' thou than her hast been mair true,
An' truer than the friend that gae thee.

Ah me! o' fashion, self, an' pride,
Mankind hae read me sic a lecture!
But yet it's a' in part repaid
By thee, my faithful, grateful Hector!

O'er past imprudence, oft alane
I've shed the saut an' silent tear;
Then sharin' a' my grief an' pain,
My poor auld friend came snoovin' near.

For a' the days we've sojourned here,
An' they've been neither fine nor few,
That thought possest thee year to year,
That a' my griefs arase frae you,

Wi' waesome face an' hingin head,
Thou wad'st hae pressed thee to my knee ;
While I thy looks as weel could read,
As thou had'st said in words to me ;—

“ O my dear master, dinna greet ;
What hae I ever done to vex thee ?
See here I'm cowerin' at your feet ;
Just take my life, if I perplex thee.

“ For a' my toil, my wee drap meat
Is a' the wage I ask of thee ;
For whilk I'm oft obliged to wait
Wi' hungry wame an' patient ee.

“ . Whatever wayward course ye steer ;
 Whatever sad mischance o’ertake ye ;
Man, here is ane will hald ye dear !
 Man, here is ane will ne’er forsake ye !”

Yes, my puir beast, though friends me scorn,
 Whom mair than life I valued dear ;
An’ thraw me out to fight forlorn,
 Wi’ ills my heart dow hardly bear,

While I hae thee to bear a part—
 My health, my plaid, an’ heezle rung,—
I’ll scorn th’ unfeeling haughty heart,
 The saucy look, and slanderous tongue.

Some friends, by pop’lar envy swayed,
 Are ten times waur than ony fae !
My heart was theirs : an’ to them laid
 As open as the light o’ day.

I feared my ain ; but had nae dread,
That I for loss o' theirs should mourn ;
Or that when luck an' favour fled,
Their friendship wad injurious turn.

But He who feeds the ravens young,
Lets naething pass he disna see ;
He'll sometime judge o' right an' wrang,
An' aye provide for you an' me.

An' hear me, Hector, thee I'll trust,
As far as thou hast wit an' skill ;
Sae will I ae sweet lovely breast,
To me a balm for every ill.

To these my trust shall ever turn,
While I have reason truth to scan ;
But ne'er beyond my mother's son,
To aught that bears the shape o' man.—

I ne'er could thole thy cravin' face,
Nor when ye pattit on my knee ;
Though in a far an' unco place,
I've whiles been forced to beg for thee.

Even now I'm in my master's power,
Where my regard may scarce be shown ;
But ere I'm forced to gie thee o'er,
When thou art auld an' senseless grown,

I'll get a cottage o' my ain,
Some wee bit cannie, lonely biel',
Where thy auld heart shall rest fu' fain,
An' share wi' me my humble meal.

Thy post shall be to guard the door
Wi' gousty bark, whate'er betides ;
Of cats an' hens to clear the floor,
An' bite the flies that vex thy sides.

When my last bannock's on the hearth,
Of that thou sanna want thy share ;
While I hae house or hauld on earth,
My Hector shall hae shelter there.

An' should grim death thy noddle save,
Till he has made an end o' me ;
Ye'll lye a wee while on the grave
O' ane whae aye was kind to thee.

There's nane alive will miss me mair ;
An' though in words thou can'st not wail,
On a' the claes thy master ware,
I ken thou'lt smell an' wag thy tail.

If e'er I'm forced wi' thee to part,
Which will be sair against my will ;
I'll sometimes mind thy honest heart,
As lang as I can climb a hill.

Come, my auld, towzy, trusty friend,
Let's speel to Queensb'ry's lofty height ;
All warldly cares we'll leave behind,
An' onward look to days more bright.

While gazing o'er the Lawland dales,
Despondence on the breeze shall flee ;
An' muses leave their native vales
To scale the clouds wi' you an' me.